

THE PATIENT
OBSERVER



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The patient observer and his friends.



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THE PATIENT OBSERVER

THE PATIENT OBSERVER

AND HIS FRIENDS

DISCARDED

By

SIMEON STRUNSKY



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DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY

1911

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To
M. G. S.

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NOTE

OF the papers that go to make up the present volume, the greater number were published as a series in the columns of the New York *Evening Post* for 1910, under the general title of The Patient Observer. For the eminently laudable purpose of making a fairly thick book, the Patient Observer's frequently recurrent "I," "me," and "mine" have now been supplemented with the experiences and reflections of his friends Harrington, Cooper, and Harding as recorded on other occasions in the New York *Evening Post*, as well as in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Bookman*, *Collier's*, and *Harper's Weekly*.

I

COWARDS

It was Harrington who brought forward the topic that men take up in their most cheerful moments. I mean, of course, the subject of death. Harrington quoted a great scientist as saying that death is the one great fear that, consciously or not, always hovers over us. But the five men who were at table with Harrington that night immediately and sharply disagreed with him.

Harding was the first to protest. He said the belief that all men are afraid of death is just as false as the belief that all women are afraid of mice. It is not the big facts that humanity is afraid of, but the little things. For himself, he could honestly say that he was

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not afraid of death. He defied it every morning when he ran for his train, although he knew that he thereby weakened his heart. He defied it when he smoked too much and read too late at night, and refused to take exercise or to wear rubbers when it rained. All men, he repeated, are afraid of little things. Personally, what he was most intensely and most enduringly afraid of was a revolving storm-door.

Harding confessed that he approaches a revolving door in a state of absolute terror. To see him falter before the rotating wings, rush forward, halt, and retreat with knees trembling, is to witness a shattering spectacle of complete physical disorganisation. Harding said that he enters a revolving door with no serious hope of coming out alive. By anticipation he feels his face driven through the glass partition in front of him, and the crash of the panel behind him upon his skull. Some day, Hard-

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ing believed, he would be caught fast in one of those compartments and stick. Axes and crowbars would be requisitioned to retrieve his lifeless form.

Bowman agreed with Harding. His own life, Bowman was inclined to believe, is typical of most civilised men, in that it is passed in constant terror of his inferiors. The people whom he hires to serve him strike fear into Bowman's soul. He is habitually afraid of janitors, train-guards, elevator-boys, barbers, bootblacks, telephone-girls, and saleswomen. But his particular dread is of waiters. There have been times when Bowman thought that to punish poor service and set an example to others, he would omit the customary tip. But such a resolution, embraced with the soup, has never lasted beyond the entrée. And, as a matter of fact, Bowman said, such a resolution always spoils his dinner. As long as he enter-

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tains it, he dares not look his man in the eye. He stirs his coffee with shaking fingers. He is cravenly, horribly afraid.

Bowman is afraid even of new waiters and of waiters he never expects to see again. Surely, it must be safe not to tip a waiter one never expected to see again. "But no," said Bowman, "I should feel his contemptuous gaze in the marrow of my backbone as I walked out. I could not keep from shaking, and I should rush from that place in agony, with the man's derisive laughter ringing in my ears."

The only one of the company who was not afraid of something concrete, something tangible, was Williams. Now Williams is notoriously, hopelessly shy; and when he took up the subject where Bowman had left it, he poured out his soul with all the fervour and abandon of which only the shy are capable. Williams was afraid of his own past. It was not a hide-

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ously criminal one, for his life had been that of a bookworm and recluse. But out of that past Williams would conjure up the slightest incident—a trifling breach of manners, a mere word out of place, a moment in which he had lost control of his emotions, and the memory of it would put him into a cold sweat of horror and shame.

Years ago, at a small dinner party, Williams had overturned a glass of water on the tablecloth; and whenever he thinks of that glass of water, his heart beats furiously, his palate goes dry, and there is a horribly empty feeling in his stomach. Once, on some similar occasion, Williams fell into animated talk with a beautiful young woman. He spoke so rapidly and so well that the rest of the company dropped their chat and gathered about him. It was five minutes, perhaps, before he was aware of what was going on. That night Williams walked

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the streets in an agony of remorse. The recollection of the incident comes back to him every now and then, and, whether he is alone at his desk, or in the theatre, or in a Broadway crowd, he groans with pain. Take away such memories of the past, Williams told us, and he knew of nothing in life that he is afraid of.

Gordon's was quite a different case. The group about the table burst out laughing when Gordon assured us that above all things else in this world he is afraid of elephants. He agreed with Bowman that in the latitude of New York City and under the zoölogic conditions prevailing here, it was a preposterous fear to entertain. Gordon lives in Harlem, and he recognises clearly enough that the only elephant-bearing jungle in the neighbourhood is Central Park, whence an animal would be compelled to take a Subway train to One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street, and lie in wait for

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him as he came home in the twilight. But irrational or no, there was the fact. To be quashed into pulp under one of those girder-like front legs, Gordon felt must be abominable. To make matters worse, Gordon has a young son who insists on being taken every Sunday morning to see the animals; and of all attractions in the menagerie, the child prefers the elephant house. He loves to feed the biggest of the elephants, and to watch him place pennies in a little wooden box and register the deposits on a bell. What Gordon suffers at such times, he told us, can be neither imagined nor described.

My own story was received with sympathetic attention. I told them that the one great terror of my life is a certain man who owes me a fairly large sum of money, borrowed some years ago. Whenever we meet he insists on recalling the debt and reminding me of how

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much the favour meant to him at the time, and how he never ceases to think of it. Meeting him has become a torture. I do my best to avoid him, and frequently succeed. But often he will catch sight of me across the street and run over and grasp me by the hand and inquire after my health in so hearty, so honest a fashion that I cannot bear to look him in the face. And as he beams on me and throws his arm over my shoulder, I can only blush and shift from one foot to the other and stammer out some excuse for hurrying away. Passers-by stop and admire the man's affection and concern for one who is evidently some poor devil of a relation from the country. One Sunday he waylaid me on Riverside Drive and introduced me to his wife as one of his dearest friends. I mumbled something about its not having rained the entire week, and his wife, who was a stately person in silks, looked at me

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out of a cold eye. Then and there I knew she decided that I was a person who had something to conceal and probably took advantage of her husband.

No; the more I think of it, the more convinced am I that very few men pass their time in contemplating death, which is the end of all things. Only those people do it who have nothing else to be afraid of, or who, like undertakers and bacteriologists, make a living out of it.

II

THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL

HARDING declares that a solid thought before going to bed sets him dreaming just like a bit of solid food. One night, Harding and I discussed modern tendencies in the Church. As a result Harding dreamt that night that he was reading a review in the *Theological Weekly* of November 12, 2009.

“Seldom,” wrote the reviewer, “has it been our good fortune to meet with as perfect a piece of work as James Brown Ducey’s ‘The American Clergyman in the Early Twentieth Century.’ The book consists of exactly half a hundred biographies of eminent churchmen; in these fifty brief sketches is mirrored faithfully the entire religious life, external and internal,

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of the American people eighty or ninety years ago. We can do our readers no better service than to reproduce from Mr. Ducey's pages, in condensed form, the lives of half a dozen typical clergymen, leaving the reader to frame his own conception of the magnificent activity which the Church of that early day brought to the service of religion.

"The Rev. Pelatiah W. Jenks, who was called to the richest pulpit in New York in 1912, succeeded within less than three years in building up an unrivalled system of dancing academies and roller-skating rinks for young people. Under him the attendance at the Sunday afternoon sparring exhibitions in the vestry rooms of the church increased from an average of 54 to an average of 650. In spite of the nominal fee charged for the use of the congregation's bowling alleys, the income from that source alone was sufficient to defray the cost of missionary

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work in all Africa, south of the Zambesi River. Dr. Jenks's highest ambition was attained in 1923 when the Onyx Church's football team won the championship of the Ecclesiastical League of Greater New York. It was in the same year that Dr. Jenks took the novel step of abandoning services in St. Basil's Chapel, now situated in a slum district, and substituting a moving-picture show with vaudeville features. Thereafter the empty chapel was filled to overcrowding on Sundays. To encourage church attendance at Sunday morning services, Dr. Jenks established a tipless barber shop. Two years later, in spite of the murmured protests of the conservative element in his congregation, he erected one of the finest Turkish baths in New York City.

"The Rev. Coningsby Botts, Ph.D., LL.D., D.D., was regarded as the greatest pulpit orator of his day. His Sunday evening sermons drew

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thousands of auditors. Of Dr. Botts's polished sermons, our author gives a complete list, together with short extracts. We should have to go far to discover a specimen of richer eloquence than the sermon delivered on the afternoon of the third Sunday after Epiphany, in the year 1911, on 'Dr. Cook and the Discovery of the North Pole.' On the second Sunday in Lent, Dr. Botts moved an immense congregation to tears with his sermon, 'Does Radium Cure Cancer?' Trinity Sunday he spoke on 'Zola and His Place in Literature.' The second Sunday in Advent he discussed 'The Position of Woman in the Fiji Islands.' We can only pick a subject here and there out of his other numerous pastoral speeches: 'Is Aviation an Established Fact?' 'The Influence of Blake Upon Dante Gabriel Rossetti,' 'Dalmatia as a Health Resort,' and 'Amatory Poetry Among the Primitive Races.'

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“The Rev. Cadwallader Abiel Jones has earned a pre-eminent place in Church history as the man who did most to endow Pittsburg with a permanent Opera House. Our author relates how in the winter of 1916, when the noted impresario Silverman threatened to sell his Opera House for a horse exchange unless 100 Pittsburg citizens would guarantee \$5,000 each for a season of twenty weeks, Dr. Jones made a house-to-house canvass in his automobile and went without sleep till the half-million dollars was pledged. He fell seriously ill of pneumonia, but recovered in time to be present at the signing of the contract. Dr. Jones used to assert that there was more moral uplift in a single performance of the ‘Mikado’ than in the entire book of Psalms. One of his notable achievements was a Christmas Eve service consisting of some magnificent kinetoscope pictures of the Day of Judgment with music by Richard

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Strauss. Tradition also ascribes to Dr. Jones a saying that the two most powerful influences for good in New York City were Miss Mary Garden and the Eden Musée. But our author thinks the story is apocryphal. He is rather inclined to believe, from the collocation of the two names, that we have here a distorted version of the Biblical creation myth.

“The Fourteenth Avenue Church of Cleveland, Ohio, under its famous pastor, the Rev. Henry Marcellus Stokes, exercised a preponderant influence in city politics from 1917 to 1925. Dr. Stokes was remorseless in flaying the bosses and their henchmen. At least a dozen candidates for Congress could trace their defeat directly to the efforts of the Fourteenth Avenue Church. The successful candidates profited by the lesson, and, during the three years' fight over tariff revision, from 1919 to 1922, they voted strictly in accordance with

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telegraphic instructions from Dr. Stokes. In the fall of 1921 Dr. Stokes's congregation voted almost unanimously to devote the funds hitherto used for home mission work to the maintenance of a legislative bureau at the State capital. The influence of the bureau was plainly perceptible in the Legislature's favourable action on such measures as the Cleveland Two-Cent Fare bill and the bill abolishing the bicycle and traffic squads in all cities with a population of more than 50,000.

"Our author lays particular stress on the career of the Rev. Dr. Brooks Powderly of New York, who, at the age of thirty-five, was recognized as America's leading authority on slum life. Dr. Powderly's numerous books and magazine articles on the subject speak for themselves. Our author mentions among others, 'The Bowery From the Inside,' 'At What Age Do Stevedores Marry?' 'The Relative Con-

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sumption of Meat, Pastry, and Vegetables Among Our Foreign Population,' 'How Soon Does the Average Immigrant Cast His First Vote?' 'The Proper Lighting for Recreation Piers,' and, what was perhaps his most popular book, 'Burglar's Tools and How to Use Them.'

"In running through the appendix to Mr. Ducey's volume," concludes the reviewer, "we come across an interesting paragraph headed, 'A Curious Survival.' It is a reprint of an obituary from the New York *Evening Post* of August, 1911, dealing with the minister of a small church far up in the Bronx, who died at the age of eighty-one, after serving in the same pulpit for fifty-three years. The *Evening Post* notice states that while the Rev. Mr. Smith was quite unknown below the Harlem, he had won a certain prestige in his own neighbourhood through his old-fashioned homilies, delivered twice every Sunday in the year, on love,

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charity, pure living, clean thinking, early marriage, and the mutual duties of parents towards their children and of children towards their parents. ‘In the Rev. Mr. Smith,’ remarks our author, ‘we have a striking vestigial specimen of an almost extinct type.’ ”

III

THE DOCTORS

THE quarrels of the doctors do not concern me. I have worked out a classification of my own which holds good for the entire profession. All doctors, I believe, may be divided into those who go clean-shaven and those who wear beards. The difference is more than one of appearance. It is a difference of temperament and conduct. The smooth-faced physician represents the buoyant, the romantic, what one might almost call the impressionistic strain in the medical profession. The other is the conservative, the classicist. My personal likings are all for the newer type, but I do not mind admitting that if I were very ill indeed, I should be tempted to send for the physician who wears a Vandyke and smiles only at long intervals.

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The reason is that when I am really ill I want some one who believes me. That is something which the clean-shaven doctor seldom does. He is of the breezy, modern school which maintains that nine patients out of ten are only the victims of their own imagination. He greets you in a jolly, brotherly fashion, takes your pulse, and says: "Oh, well, I guess you're not going to die this trip," and he roars, as if it were the greatest joke in the world to call up the picture of such dreadful possibilities. When he prescribes, it is in a half-apologetic, half-quizzical manner, and almost with a wink, as if he were to say, "This is a game, old man, but I suppose it's as honest a way of earning one's living as most ways." While he writes out his directions, he comments: "There is nothing the matter with you, and you will take this powder three times a day with your meals. It is just a case of too much tobacco supple-

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mented by a fertile fancy. Rub your chest with this before you go to bed and avoid draughts. And what you need is not medicine but the active agitation for two hours every day of the two legs which the Lord gave you, and which you now employ exclusively for making your way to and from the railway station. This is for your digestion, and you can have it put up in pills or in liquid form, according to taste. And the next time you feel inclined to call me in, think it over in the course of a ten-mile walk."

Now this may be cheering if somewhat mixed treatment, but it has nothing of that sympathy which the ailing body craves. The case is much worse if your smooth-faced physician happens to be a personal friend. The indifference with which such a man will listen to the most pitiful recital of physical suffering is extraordinary. You may be out on the golf links together, and

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he has just made an exceptionally fine iron shot from a bad lie and in the face of a lively breeze. He is naturally pleased, and you take courage from the situation. "By the way, Smith," you say, "I have been feeling rather queer for a day or two. There is a gnawing sensation right here, and when I stoop——" "That must have been 180 yards," he says, "but not quite on the green. You don't chew your food enough. Take a glass of hot water before your breakfast—and you had better try your mashie!" Of course, no one likes to talk shop, especially on the golf links. Still you think, if you were a physician and you had a friend who had a gnawing sensation, you would be more considerate. After the game he lights his cigar and orders you not to smoke if the pain in your chest is really what you have described it. "In me," he says, cheerfully, "you get a physician and a horrible example for one price."

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But there is one thing that this impressionistic school of medicine has in common with the other kind. Both types are faithful to the funereal type of waiting-room which is one of the signs of the trade. It is a room in which all the arts of the undertaker have seemingly been called upon to bring out the full possibilities of the average New York brownstone "front-parlour." I have often tried to decide whether, in a doctor's waiting-room, night or day was more conducive to thoughts of the grave. At night a lamp flickers dimly in one corner of the long room, and the shadows only deepen those other shadows which lie on the ailing spirit. But this same darkness mercifully conceals the long line of ash-coloured family portraits in gold frames, the ash-coloured carpet and chandelier, and the hideous aggregation of ash-coloured couches and chairs which make up the daylight picture. Why doctors' recep-

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tion rooms should always so strongly combine the attractiveness of a popular lunch-room on a rainy day with the quiet domestic atmosphere of a county jail, I have never been able to find out, unless the object is to reduce the patient to such a horrible state of depression that the mere summons to enter the doctor's presence makes one feel very much better already. There are times when to be told that one has pneumonia or an incipient case of tuberculosis must be a relief after an hour spent in one of those dreadful ante-chambers.

The literature in a physician's waiting-room is not exhilarating. Usually, there is an extensive collection of periodicals four months old and over. From this I gather that physicians' wives and daughters are persistent but somewhat deliberate readers of current literature. The sense of age about the magazines on a doctor's table is heightened by the absence of the

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front and back covers. The only way of ascertaining the date of publication is to hunt for the table of contents. That, however, is a task which few able-bodied men in the prime of life are equal to, not to say a roomful of sick people, nervous with anticipation. Most patients under such circumstances set out courageously, but only to lose themselves in the first half-dozen pages of the advertising section. Yet the result is by no means harmful. There is something about the advertising agent's buoyant, insinuating, sympathetic tone that is very restful to the invalid nerves. Harrington tells me that the small suburban house in which he lives, the paint and roofing with which he protects it against the weather, the lawn-mower which he has secured in anticipation of a good crop of grass, and the small stock of poultry he experiments with, were all acquired through advertisements read in doctors' waiting-rooms.

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Some physicians take in the illustrated weeklies as well as the monthly magazines. In one of the former I found the other day an excellent panoramic view of the second inauguration of President McKinley.

But I am afraid I have wandered somewhat from what I set out to say. I meant to show how different from your clean-shaven doctor is the physician of the conventional beard. There is no trifling with him. He takes himself seriously, and he takes you seriously. His examination is as thorough as the stethoscope can make it; in fact, he listens to your heart-action long enough to make you fear the worst. This is in marked contrast with the smooth-faced doctor, who, as a rule, asks you to show your tongue, and when you obey he does not look at it, but begins to go through his mail, whistling cheerfully. He puts such vital questions as, how far up is your bedroom window

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at night, and do you ever have a sense of eye-strain after reading too long, and when you reply, he pays no attention. His entire attitude expresses the conviction that either you are not ill at all, or that if you are, you are not in a position to give an intelligent account of yourself. That is not the case with the other physician. He asks precise questions and insists on detailed replies. Nothing escapes him. While you are describing the sensations in the vicinity of your left lung, he will ask quietly whether you have always had the habit of biting your nails.

Under such sympathetic attention the patient's spirits rise. From an apologetic state of mind he passes to a sense of his own importance. Instead of being ashamed of his ailments he tries to describe as many as he can think of. His specific complaint may be a touch of sciatica, but he takes pleasure in re-

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calling a bad habit of breathing through the mouth in moments of excitement, and a tricky memory which often leads him to carry about his wife's letters an entire week before mailing them. The need for a certain amount of self-castigation is implanted in all of us, and it is satisfied in the form of confession. Many people do it as part of their religious beliefs. Others belabour themselves in the physician's office. Men who in the bosom of the family will deny that they read too late at night and smoke too many cigars will call such transgressions to the doctor's attention if he should happen to overlook them. I know of one man suffering from neuralgia of the arm who insisted on telling his doctor that it made him ill to read the advertisements in the subway cars. But the doctor who wears no beard does not invite such confidences.

IV

INTERROGATION

ONE day a census enumerator in the employ of the United States government knocked at my door and left a printed list of questions for me to answer. The United States government wished me to state how many sons and daughters I had and whether my sons were males and my daughters females. I was further required to state that not only was I of white descent and that my wife (if I had one) was of white descent, but that our children (if we had any) were also of white descent. I was also called upon to state whether any of my sons under the age of five (if I had any) had ever been in the military or naval service of the United States, and whether my grandfather (if I had

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one) was attending school on September 30 last. There were other questions of a like nature, but these are all I can recall at present.

Halfway through the schedule I was in a high state of irritation. The census enumerator's visit in itself I do not consider a nuisance. Like most Americans who sniff at the privileges of citizenship, I secretly delight in them. I speak cynically of boss-rule and demagogues, but I cast my vote on Election Day in a state of solemn and somewhat nervous exaltation that frequently interferes with my folding the ballot in the prescribed way. I have never been summoned for jury duty, but if I ever should be, I shall accept with pride and in the hope that I shall not be peremptorily challenged. It needs some such official document as a census schedule to bring home the feeling that government and state exist for me and my own welfare. Filling out the answers

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in the list was one of the pleasant manifestations of democracy, of which paying taxes is the unpleasant side. The printed form before me embodied a solemn function. I was aware that many important problems depended upon my answering the questions properly. Only then, for instance, could the government decide how many Congressmen should go to Washington, and what my share was of the total wealth of the country, and how I contributed to the drift from the farm to the city, and what was the average income of Methodist clergymen in cities of over 100,000 population.

What, then, if so many of the questions put to me by the United States government seemed superfluous to the point of being absurd? The process may involve a certain waste of paper and ink and time, but it is the kind of waste without which the business of life would be im-

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possible. The questions that really shape human happiness are those to which the reply is obvious. The answers that count are those the questioner knew he would get and was prepared to insist upon getting. Harrington tells me that when he was married he could not help smiling when the minister asked him whether he would take the woman by his side to be his wedded wife. "What," said Harrington, "did he think I was there for? Or did he detect any sign of wavering at the last moment?" What reply does the clergyman await when he asks the rejoicing parents whether they are willing to have their child baptized into the community of the redeemed? What is all ritual, as it has been framed to meet the needs of the human heart, but a preordained order of question and response? In birth and in burial, in joy and in sorrow, for those who have escaped shipwreck and those who have escaped the plague, the

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practice of the ages has laid down formulæ which the soul does not find the less adequate because they are ready-made.

Consider the multiplication-table. I don't know who first hit upon the absurd idea that questions are intended to elicit information. In so many laboratories are students putting questions to their microscope. In so many lawyers' offices are clients putting questions to their attorneys. In so many other offices are haggard men and women putting questions to their doctors. But the number of all these is quite insignificant when compared with the number of questions that are framed every day in the schoolrooms of the world. Wherefore, I say, consider the multiplication-table. A greater sum of human interest has centred about the multiplication-table than about all doctors' and lawyers' and biologists' offices since the beginning of time. Millions of schoolmasters have

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asked what is seven times eleven and myriads of children's brains have toiled for the answer that all the time has been reposing in the teacher's mind. What is seven times eleven? What is the capital of Dahomey? When did the Americans beat the British at Lexington? What is the meaning of the universe? We shall never escape the feeling that these questions are put only to vex us by those who know the answer.

I said that I am looking forward to be summoned for jury-duty. But I know that the solemn business of justice, like most of the world's business, is made up of the mumbled question that is seldom heard and the fixed reply that is never listened to. The clerk of the court stares at the wall and drones out the ancient formula which begins "Jusolimly-swear," and ends "Swelpyugod," and the witness on the stand blurts out "I do." The

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Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court asks the President-elect whether he will be faithful to the Constitution and the laws of the United States, and the President-elect invariably says that he will. The candidate for American citizenship is asked whether he hereby renounces allegiance to foreign kings, emperors, and potentates, and fervently responds that he does. When I took my medical examination for a life-insurance policy, the physician asked me whether I suffered from asthma, bronchitis, calculus, dementia, erysipelas, and several score other afflictions, and, without waiting for an answer, he wrote "No" opposite every disease.

Whenever I think of the world and the world's opinion, I think of Mrs. Harrington in whom I see the world typified. Now Mrs. Harrington is inconceivable in a scheme where the proper reply to every question is not as thoroughly established as the rule for the proper

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use of forks at dinner. In the presence of an unfamiliar reply to a familiar question Mrs. Harrington is suspicious and uneasy. She scents either a joke or an insult; and we are all Mrs. Harrington. If you were to ask a stranger whom did he consider the greatest playwright of all times and, instead of Shakespeare or Molière, he were to say Racine, it would be as if one were to ask him whether he took tea or coffee for breakfast and he said arsenic. It would be as though you asked your neighbour what he thought of a beautiful sunset and he said he did not like it. It would be as if I were to say to Mrs. Harrington, "Well, I suppose I have stayed quite long enough," and she were to say, "Yes, I think you had better be going."

V

THE MIND TRIUMPHANT

ONE night after dinner I quoted for Harding the following sentence from an address by President Lowell of Harvard: "The most painful defect in the American College at the present time is the lack of esteem for excellence in scholarship." Thereupon Harding recalled what some one had said on a related subject: "Athleticism is rooted in an exaggerated spirit of intercollegiate rivalry and a publicity run mad."

That night Harding dreamt the following:
*From the Harvard "Crimson" for October 8,
1937:*

"Twenty-five thousand men, women, and children in the Stadium yesterday broke into a

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delirium of cheers when the Cambridge team in Early English Literature won its fourth successive victory over Yale. Both sides were trained to the minute, however different the methods of the two head coaches. The Harvard team during the last two weeks had been put on a course of desultory reading from Bede to the closing of the theatres by the Puritans in 1642, while Yale had concentrated on the Elizabethan dramatists and signal practice.

“Harvard won the toss, and Captain Hartley led off with a question on the mediæval prototypes of Thomas More’s ‘Utopia.’ Brooks of Yale made a snappy reply, and by a dashing string of three questions on the authorship of ‘Ralph Roister-Doister,’ the sources of Chaucer’s ‘Nonne’s Preeste’s Tale,’ and the exact site of the Globe Theatre, carried the fight into the enemy’s territory. But Harvard held

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well, and the contest was a fairly even one for twenty minutes. There was an anxious moment towards the end, when Gosse, for Harvard, muffed on the date of the first production of 'The Tempest,' but before Yale could frame another question the whistle blew.

"In the second half, Yale perceptibly weakened. It still showed brilliant flashes of attack, but its defence was poor, especially against Brooks's smashing questions on the Italian influences in Milton's shorter poems. Harvard made its principal gains against Burckhardt, who simply could not solve Winship's posers from Ben Jonson and Beaumont and Fletcher. The Yale coaches finally took him out and sent in Skinner, the best Elizabethan on the scrub team, but it was too late to save the day. There were rumours after the game that Burckhardt had broken training after the Princeton contest by going on a three days'

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canoe trip up the Merrimac. That, however, does not detract from the glory of Harvard's magnificent triumph."

From the Boston "Herald" of October 9, 1937:

"William J. Burns and Douglas Mitchell, sophomores at Harvard, were arrested last night for creating a disturbance in the dining-room of the Mayflower Hotel by letting loose a South American baboon with a pack of fire-crackers attached to its tail. When arraigned before Magistrate Conroy, they declared that they were celebrating Harvard's Early English victory over Yale, and were discharged."

From the Yale "News" of June 12, 1940:

"In the presence of twenty thousand spectators, including the President of the United States, the greater part of his Cabinet, and several foreign ambassadors, Yale's 'varsity eight

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simply ran away from Harvard in the tenth annual competition in Romance languages and philology. Yale took the lead from the start, and at the end of fifteen minutes was ahead by 16 points to 7. . . . This splendid victory is due in part to the general superiority of the New Haven eight, but too much credit cannot be given to little Howells, who steered a flawless contest. The Blue made use of the short, snappy English style of text-book, while Harvard pinned its faith to the more deliberate German seminar system. After the contest captains for the following year were elected. Yale chose Bridgman, who did splendid work on Corneille and the poets of the Pléiade, while Harvard's choice fell on Butterworth, probably the best intercollegiate expert on Cervantes. In the evening all the contestants attended a performance of 'The Prince and the Peach' at the Gaiety. It is reported that no less than

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nine out of the sixteen men have received flattering offers to coach Romance language teams in the leading Western universities."

From the "Daily Princetonian" of February 13, 1933:

"Princeton won the intercollegiate championship yesterday with 63 points to Harvard's 37, Yale's 18, and 7 each for Brown, Williams, and Pennsylvania. Princeton won by her brilliant work in the classics and biology. Firsts were made by Bentley, who did the 220 lines of Homer in 29 3-5 minutes, scanned 100 Alcaics from Horace in 62 seconds flat, and hurdled over nine doubtful readings and seven lacunæ in the text of Aristotle's 'Poetics' in 171½ minutes. Two firsts went to Ramsdell, who made only two errors in Protective Colouration and one error in explaining the mutations of the Evening Primrose."

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*From the editorial columns of the New York
"Evening Post" for July 7, 1933, and
October 11, 1938:*

(1) "Scholastic competitions have ceased to be the means to an end and have become an end in themselves. The passion to win has swept away every other consideration. Professionalism has laid its tainted hand on the sports of our college youth. High-priced professors from the University of Leipzig and the École des Hautes Études are engaged to drill our teams to victory. Men who should have long ago taken their Ph.D. have been known deliberately to flunk examinations so as to be eligible for the 'varsity contests. Promising students in the preparatory schools are bribed to enroll with this or that college. The whole problem of summer mathematics reeks to heaven. It is not enough that a student during eight months of the year will put in all his

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time on invariants and the theory of numbers. Vacation time finds him at some fashionable resort, tutoring the sons of millionaires in multiplication and quadratic equations."

(2) "Thus our so-called student 'activities' are neither active in the true sense, nor fit for students. There has grown up a small clan of intellectual athletes who win victories while thousands of mediocre students, six feet and over and having an average weight of 195 pounds, stand around and cheer. Our student-managers have become men of business, purely. The receipts at the last Harvard-Yale debate on the popular election of United States senators amounted to more than \$50,000. The Greek philology team spends three-quarters of its time in touring the country. The *Evening Howl* prints the pictures of the $\Phi B K$ members every other day. It is time to call a halt."

VI

ON CALLING WHITE BLACK

IF it were not for the deadly hatred that exists between Bob, who will be four years old very soon, and Abdul Hamid II, late Sultan of Turkey, I hardly know what would become of my moral standards. Whenever my sense of right and wrong grows blunted; whenever the inextricable confusion of good and bad in everything about us becomes unusually depressing, I have only to recall how virulent, how inflexible, how certain is Bob's judgment on the character and career of the deposed Ottoman despot.

Bob is Harrington's youngest son. He and Abdul Hamid II first met in the pages of a fat new history of the Turkish Revolution hav-

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ing a white star and crescent on the cover and perhaps half a hundred pictures inside. The book immediately supplanted the encyclopædia and General Kuropatkin's illustrated memoirs of the Russo-Japanese War, in Bob's affections. Who, he wanted to know, was the swarthy, lean, hook-nosed gentleman in a tasselled cap, who stood up in a carriage to acknowledge the cheers of the crowd. That, Harrington told him, was a bad Sultan, and tried to turn to the next picture, which showed an unhappy-looking Armenian priest casting his first vote for a member of Parliament.

But the boy has for some years been in the stage where every fact laid before him must be backed up with an adequate reason. What does a bad Sultan do, he wished to know. Harrington was puzzled. It seemed a pity to bring Bob into touch with the cruelties and pains of life. But on the other hand here

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was a chance to inoculate Bob at a very early age with a hatred for tyranny and oppression, and a love for the principles of representative government; and on the whole I am inclined to think Harrington did right. In any case Harrington told the boy that the bad Sultan was in the habit of sending his soldiers to shoot people, and burn down their homes, and take away everything they had to eat, and put all the women into jail. He hesitated over the children. It was out of the question to tell Bob how, by order of the bad Sultan, little children were ripped open before their mothers' eyes, or had their brains dashed out against the walls. The little children, Harrington finally told Bob, were whipped by the bad Sultan's bad soldiers, and had all their toys confiscated.

But that apparently was not enough. Bob wanted to know what else the bad Sultan did

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to the little children. What else? Harrington's criminal imagination had exhausted itself. He didn't know, and he called upon Bob for suggestions.

"He gives them medicine," said Bob, "and sprays their throats with peroxide, and they cry." Was there any after-thought in that remark, Harrington wondered. Could it be that he had only succeeded in arousing in that active young mind the recognition of a certain family resemblance between himself and Abdul the Damned? For that matter, was it fair to the late Commander of the Faithful to charge his name with a crime he was probably innocent of? But then again, if that particular crime was necessary to the lesson borne in on Bob, why hesitate? So Harrington ponders a moment and decides; yes, even to that level of iniquity had Abdul Hamid II sunk. The atomiser was one of the instruments of tor-

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ture he made use of. And when the bad Sultan is finally checked in his nefarious career, and dragged off to prison, where he gets nothing but hard bread to eat and filthy water to drink, Bob retains the impression that all this came about because the Young Turks grew tired of having their throats washed with peroxide solutions.

“When I see the bad Sultan,” says Bob, “I will punch him, like this,” and his fist, shooting out and up, knocks the pipe from Harrington’s mouth.

“But aren’t you afraid he will hurt you?” his father asks.

“No,” says Bob; “I’ll run away.”

And the boy has been steadfast in his hatred. He meets the Sultan every night just before supper, when he insists on being taken right through the fat, red volume with the star and crescent on the cover; and every time the

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Sultan's face appears in the pictures, the boy smites it with his fist. Bob goes to his meals with an excellent appetite engendered by his violent encounters with that disreputable monarch.

Abdul Hamid II is in very bad shape from the punishment. Bob has caught him in the act of addressing the English members of the Balkan Committee, and left him only a pair of shoulders and one leg. Of the Sultan driving to the Selamlık every Friday there is visible now only one of the carriage horses and the fragments of a cavalryman. Nor is the physical presentment of Abdul Hamid the only thing that has gone to pieces under Bob's unrelenting hostility. The Sultan's character has been growing worse and worse as night after night the boy insists upon new examples of what bad Sultans do.

To satisfy that inexhaustible demand, Harrington has shouldered Abdul Hamid with all

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the sins of all the epochs in history. He has made him steep unhappy Christian prisoners in pitch and burn them for torches, and send innocent Frenchmen to the guillotine, and tomahawk the Puritan settlers as they worked in the fields. He has made him responsible for St. Bartholomew's Day, and Andersonville prison. He has robbed the Czar of his just credit by making Abdul Hamid the hero of Bloody Sunday in St. Petersburg. I am not sure but that Harrington has not laid the abnormally high price of meat and eggs at the Sultan's door. There are times when I really feel that Harrington should ask Abdul Hamid's pardon.

But no; he should *not* beg his pardon. For that is just the point I set out to make. It is a moral tonic to be brought into touch with Bob's opinion of Abdul Hamid, and to get to feel that things are not all a hodge-podge, in-

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differently good or indifferently bad, as you choose to look at it. In Bob's world there are good things and bad things, and the good is good and the bad is bad. Bob knows nothing of the cant which makes the robber monopolist only the sad victim of forces outside his control. Bob knows nothing of the sentimental twaddle about that interesting class of people who are more sinned against than sinning. Bob, like Nature, indulges in no fine distinctions. When he meets a bad Sultan he punches his head. When he meets a good Sultan, nothing is too good to believe concerning him.

And he accepts the one as naturally as he does the other. He has no moral enthusiasms or enthusiasms of any kind. It is merely an obvious thing to him that right should triumph and wrong should fail. He does not play with his emotions. I remember how, one

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night, in relating the fall of Abdul Hamid, Harrington had worked himself up to an extraordinary pitch of excitement. Never had that despot been painted in such horrid colours; and after he had told how the palace guards rose against the Constitution, and how the Young Turks marched upon Constantinople, and how the craven tyrant, crying "Don't hurt me, don't hurt me," was dragged from his bed by the good soldiers and clapped into prison, Harrington turned, all aglow, to Bob, and waited for the boy to echo his enthusiasm. But Bob waited till the cell-door clanged behind the Unspeakable Turk, and said: "Now tell me about the giraffe that fell into the water."

I spoke of the good Sultan. Of course there had to be one, and Harrington found him in the same book with the bad Sultan. And when he had studied the somewhat stolid features of

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Mohammed V for a little while, it was inevitable that Bob should ask what a good Sultan did. Harrington was in difficulties again. It was impossible to explain that at bottom there really is no such thing as a good Sultan; that they are as a rule cruel and immoral, and always expensive; and that at best they are harmless, if somewhat stupid, survivals. But since the very idea of a bad Sultan demands a good one, Harrington tried to satisfy Bob by investing Mohammed V with a large number of negative virtues. "A good Sultan does not shoot people, or burn down houses or throw women into jail or whip little children." The portrait failed to please. Bob's faith demanded something robust to cling to; and in the end he compelled his father to do for the good Sultan the opposite of what he had done for the bad one. Mohammed V stands to-day invested with all the virtues that have been

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manifested on earth from Enoch to Florence Nightingale.

And yet of the two, Bob and his father, I must say again that it is Bob who has the more truthful and healthy outlook upon life, and it is good for Harrington to rehearse with him the history of the fall of Abdul Hamid II three or four times a week. Bob has no flabby standards. He wastes no time in looking for lighter shades in what is black or dark spots in the white. Bob holds, for instance, that bad soldiers shoot down good people, and that good soldiers shoot down bad people. He is quite as close to the truth as I am, who believe that there is no such thing as a good soldier and that the business of shooting down people, whether good or bad, is a wretched one. For all that, I know there come times when a man must take human life, and in such cases Bob has the advantage over Hamlet and me. Where

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we falter and speculate and end by making a mess of it all, Bob just punches the bad Sultan's head and passes on to the giraffe that fell into the water.

VII

THE SOLID FLESH

PHYSICAL culture as pursued in the hour probably benefits a man's body; but the strain on his moral nature is terrific. I go through my morning exercise with hatred for all the world and contempt for myself. Why, for instance, should every system of gymnastics require that a man place himself in the most ridiculous and unnatural postures? A stout middle-aged man who struggles to touch the floor with the palms of his hands is not a beautiful sight. Equally preposterous is the practice of standing on one leg and stretching the other toward the nape of one's neck. In the confines of a city bedroom such evolutions are not only ungraceful but frequently dangerous.

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Harrington tells me that every morning when he lunges forward he scrapes the tips of his fingers against the edge of the bed and the tears come into his eyes. When he throws his arms back he hits the gas jet. Harrington's young son, who insists on being present during the ordeal, believes that the entire performance is intended for his amusement, and laughs immoderately. I cannot blame him. Morning exercise is incompatible with the maintenance of parental dignity. Were I a child again I could neither love nor respect a father who placed two chairs at a considerable distance from each other and mounted them horizontally like the human bridge in a melodrama.

I admit, of course, that home exercises have the merit of being cheap. No special apparatus is required. The ordinary household furniture and such heirlooms as are readily available will usually suffice. An onyx clock will do instead

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of chest weights. Any two volumes of the Encyclopædia Britannica will take the place of dumb-bells or Indian clubs. Many a time I have stood still and held a bronze lamp in my outstretched right hand for a minute and then held it in my left hand for half a minute. I know of one man who skipped the rope one hundred times every morning. Within four months he had lost three and a half pounds, and driven the family in the flat below into nervous prostration. I have even been told that there are systems of exercise which show how physical perfection may be attained by scientifically manipulating, for fifteen minutes every day, a couple of fountain pens and a paper cutter. But I cannot reconcile myself to such methods because of the confusion they introduce into the world of common things. A table is no longer something to write upon or to eat upon, but something to lie down upon while one flings

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out his arms and legs fifty times in four contrary directions. A broom-stick is an instrument for strengthening the shoulder muscles. When I see a transom, I find myself estimating the number of times I could chin it.

The intimate connection between the hygienic life and the temptation to tell lies is a delicate subject to touch upon; but the facts may as well be brought out now as later. People of otherwise irreproachable conduct will lose all sense of truthfulness when they speak of physical culture and fresh air. They will exaggerate the number of inches they keep their bedroom windows raised in midwinter; they will quote ridiculous estimates of the doctors' bills they have saved; they will represent themselves as being in the most incredibly perfect health. I know one sober, intelligent business-man who not only habitually understates, by ten degrees,

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the temperature of his morning tub, but gives an altogether distorted impression of the alacrity with which he leaps into his bath every morning, and the reluctance with which he leaves it. This same man asserts that he can now walk from the Chambers Street ferry to his office in Wall Street in astonishing time. And not only that, but since he took to walking as much as he could, he has cut down his daily number of cigars to one-fourth (which is untrue). And not only that, but since he has gone in for exercise and fresh air and has given up smoking, his income has increased by at least 50 per cent., owing to his improved health and clearer mental vision. But that again, as I happen to know, is untrue.

But there is another, much more subtle form of prevarication. Smith meets you in the street and remarks upon your flabby appearance. He argues that you ought to weigh twenty-five

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pounds less than you do, and that a long daily walk will do the trick. "Look at me," he says, "I walk ten miles every day and there isn't an ounce of superfluous flesh on me." And so saying, he slaps his chest and offers to let you feel how hard the muscles are about his diaphragm. Of course, there is no superfluous flesh on Smith. And if he abstained entirely from physical exertion and guzzled heavy German beer all day and dined on turtle soup and roast goose every day, and ate unlimited quantities of pastry, he would still be what he describes as free from superfluous flesh. *I* call it scraggy. Smith is one of the men set apart by nature to perpetuate the Don Quixote type of beauty, just as I am doomed with the lapse of time to approximate the Falstaffian type. Smith's five sisters and brothers are thin. His father was slight and neurasthenic. His mother was spare and angular. Little wonder the Smith

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family is fond of walking. Friction and air-resistance in their case are practically non-existent.

I do not, of course, mean to deny the ancient tradition that a sound body makes a sound mind. But I would only point out that we are just beginning to wake to the truth of the converse proposition, that a sane, equable, easy-going mind keeps the body well. Hence there are really two kinds of exercise, and two kinds of hygiene, a physical kind and a spiritual kind. Which one a man will choose should be left entirely to himself. It is only a question of approaching the same goal from two different directions. Smith is welcome to make himself a better man by exercising his legs three hours a day. But I prefer to sit in an armchair and exercise my soul. Smith comes in refreshed from a half-day's sojourn in the open air, and I come away refreshed from a roomful of old

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friends talking three at a time amidst clouds of tobacco smoke.

The trouble with so many of the physical-culture devotees is that they tire out the soul in trying to serve it. I am inclined to believe that the beneficent effects of the regular quarter-hour's exercise before breakfast, is more than offset by the mental wear and tear involved in getting out of bed fifteen minutes earlier than one otherwise would. Some one has calculated that the amount of moral resolution expended in New York City every winter day in getting up to take one's cold bath would be enough to decide a dozen municipal elections in favour of the decent candidate, or to send fifty grafting legislators to jail for an average term of three and a half years. The same specialist has worked out the formula that the average married man's usefulness about the house varies inversely with his fondness for vio-

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lent exercise. Smith's dumb-bell practice, for instance, leaves him no time for hanging up the pictures. After his long Sunday's walk he is invariably too tired to answer his wife's questions concerning the influence of the tariff on high prices.

By this time it will be plain that I am no passionate admirer of the gospel of salvation by hygiene. So many things that the world holds precious have been developed under the most unhygienic conditions. Revolutions for the liberation of mankind have been plotted in unsanitary cellars and dungeons. Religions have taken root and prospered in catacombs. Great poems have been written in stuffy garrets. Great orations have been spoken before sweating crowds in the foul air of overheated legislative chambers. Lovers are said to be fond of dark corners and out-of-the-way places. It is not by accident that children, said to be

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the most beautiful thing in the world, are so inordinately fond of dirt. Every great truth on its first appearance has been declared a menace to morals and society; in other words, unhygienic. And yet one would imagine that truth, from its habit of going naked, would appeal strongly to the ardent fresh-air practitioner.

VIII

SOME NEWSPAPER TRAITS

AT Cooper's house last winter I met Professor Grundschnitt of Berlin, who has been making a study of American newspaper methods in behalf of the German government. For some time after the professor's arrival in this country, he told me, he found himself completely at sea. American newspapers, it appeared to him, were written in two languages. One was the English language as he had studied it in the writings of Oliver Goldsmith, John Ruskin, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. In America it seemed to be used chiefly by auctioneers, art critics, and immigrants. The other was a dialect, evidently English in origin, but sufficiently removed from the parent stock to be

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quite unintelligible. The professor spent many painful hours over such sentences as "Jeffries annexes the Brunette Beauty's Angora," and "Sugar Barons hand Uncle Sam a lemon." This dialect, he found, was extensively employed by truck-drivers, playwrights, and college students.

It did not take the professor very long, however, to overcome this initial difficulty. His education proceeded rapidly. One of the first things he learned, so he told me, is that some American newspapers are printed in black ink and some in red. As a rule, the former tell more of the truth, but the latter sell many more copies. On Sunday, which in America is observed much more rigorously than in Europe, the red ink predominates. The professor suggested that this might be a survival of primitive times when the British ancestors of the present-day Americans tattooed themselves in honour of

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their gods. It is universally accepted that the American business man reads so many papers because he has neither the time nor the energy to read books. But this would seem to be contradicted on Sundays, when every American business man reads two or three times the equivalent of the entire works of William Shakespeare. Herr Grundschnitt was inclined to believe that carrying home the Sunday paper is the most popular form of physical exercise among our people.

A very curious circumstance about the press in all the great American cities, the professor thought, is that every newspaper has a larger circulation than any other three newspapers combined. According to the arithmetical system in use among all civilised peoples, that would be manifestly impossible. But the professor imagines that the methods of calculation by which such results are obtained are the

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same as those employed by politicians in estimating their majorities on the eve of election day, by millionaires in paying their personal taxes, and by operatic sopranos in figuring out their age. The influence of a newspaper depends, of course, upon its circulation. Such influence is exercised directly in the form of news and editorial comment, and indirectly in the form of wrapping paper.

Still another curious trait about all American newspapers, this learned German found, is that they tell a story backward. This arises from the desire to put the most important thing first; and in this country it is the rule that the thing which happens last is the most important. As an illustration Herr Grundschnitt read the following brief account clipped from one of the principal newspapers in New York city:

“Arthur Wellesley Jones died in the municipal hospital last night as the result of injuries

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sustained in an automobile accident. The end was peaceful. Mr. Jones was driving his own machine down Fifth Avenue when he ran into a laundry-wagon at Twenty-first Street. He had left his home in New Rochelle an hour before. Mr. Jones was an enthusiastic motorist. In 1905 he won the Smithsonian cup for heavy cars. In 1903 he was second in the Westchester hill-climbing contest. In 1899 he helped to organise the first road race in New York State. He was in Congress from 1894 to 1898, and was elected to the Legislature in 1889, the same year that his eldest son was born. Two years before that event he married a daughter of Henry K. Smith of Philadelphia. He was graduated from Yale, having prepared for that institution at Andover, where he played right tackle on the football team. As a child he showed a decided taste for mechanics. He was born in 1861."

The daily press in America, the professor

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went on to say, takes extraordinary interest in visitors from abroad. He referred, as an instance in point, to the recent arrival in New York of a nephew of the Dalai Lama of Tibet. As the ship was being warped into the dock, a young man with a notebook asked the distinguished visitor if it was true that his Holiness, the Dalai Lama, had been found guilty of converting the temple treasures at Lhasa to his own use. Upon receiving a reply in the negative, the young man asked what progress the suffrage movement had made in Tibet. He was told that inasmuch as every woman in Tibet must take care of several husbands instead of one, as among the more civilised nations, women there were not interested in the question of votes. Thereupon the young man asked whether Tibet offered a promising market for automobiles. He was pleased to learn that Tibet, with its extremely sparse population and its very precip-

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itous cliffs, was an ideal place for the automobilist.

These, however, were superficial characteristics. What the professor was anxious to learn was just how the newspapers influence the national life to the remarkable extent they undoubtedly do. He knew, of course, that the Americans are a free people, and that they select their own lawmakers and magistrates. He soon discovered that when the people desire to choose some one to rule over them, they name two, three, or more men for the same office. The newspapers then proceed to accuse these men of the vilest crimes, and the one who comes out least besmirched is declared to be elected. After he has been put into office the people no longer pay attention to him, leaving it to the newspapers to see that he conducts himself properly. When a high official is caught stealing the people rejoice, because it

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shows that the newspapers are doing their duty.

In the sphere of social relations, Herr Grund-schnitt learned, the newspapers are mainly concerned with safeguarding the purity and integrity of the home. Most of them do this by printing full accounts of all murder and divorce trials. The professor told me that he could recall nothing in literature that quite equals the white heat of indignation with which the editor of the *Star* once spoke of "the festering national sore revealed in the proceedings of the Dives divorce suit, the nauseous details of which the reader will find in all their hideous completeness on the first three pages of the present issue, together with all the photographs ruled out of evidence on the grounds of decency." The press also serves the cause of public morals by holding up to scorn the vices and extravagances of the vulgar rich, whose ill-

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used millions, as they hasten to point out elsewhere, are nothing more than what any American may look forward to, provided he has courage and energy.

The same ingenious method of promoting virtue by holding up vice to obloquy is pursued in every other field, the learned German told me. The newspapers do not print the names of men who support their wives, but they print the names of men who do not, or who support more than one. They do not publish the photographs of honest bank clerks, but of dishonest ones, and of these only when they have stolen a very large sum. They pay no attention to a clergyman as long as he advocates the brotherhood of man, but they have large headlines about the minister who believes in the moderate use of the Scotch highball. They overlook a college professor's epoch-making researches in American history, and take him up when he

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comes out in favour of an exclusive diet of raw spinach. From the newspaper point of view, a college professor counts less than a professional gambler; a gambler counts less than an actress; a good actress counts less than a bad one; a bad actress counts less than a prize-fighter; a prize-fighter counts less than a chimpanzee that has been taught to smoke cigarettes; and an educated chimpanzee counts less than a millionaire who suffers from paranoia. By continuously pondering on the horrors of crime and vice as depicted in the newspapers, the American people are roused to such a hatred of evil that some editors receive a salary of \$100,000 a year.

Oddly enough, the American people freely criticise their newspapers. One of the commonest charges is that their editors write with great haste and little accurate information. But, Herr Grundschnitt argued, it is unfair to insist that newspapers shall be both forceful and ac-

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curate. It is true that the editors who supply the American people with their opinions think fast and write fast, but it is absurd to maintain that as a class they are unreasonably set in their own beliefs. Editors, as a matter of fact, change their opinions every little while. In such cases they usually have no difficulty in proving that, while their present views are right, their previous views were also right. This makes for consistency. Nor is there any reason for maintaining, as is often done, that editors are restive under criticism. The professor declared that there are very few newspapers in the United States that will refuse to print a letter from any one who believes that the paper in question is the only one in town with courage and honesty enough to tell the truth and that it is the best newspaper in the country at the price.

As for the old-fashioned critics who main-

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tain that not even the best newspaper tells more than half the truth, my informant pointed out that every town and village in the United States has at least two daily publications. The conscientious reader who buys both is thus saved from error.

When I rose to say good-night the professor accompanied me to the door, and would not let me go till he had pronounced a final eulogy on the press in general, and the American newspaper in particular. He expatiated on its omnipresence. The printed sheet is with a man when he wakes in the morning, and when he falls asleep at night, and when he is at the breakfast table with his wife. The newspaper breaks up families and reunites other families, though it usually misspells their names. It chastises the rascal, and worries the honest man. It can make a reputation in a day, and destroy a reputation in ten minutes, sending its owner into the

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grave or upon the vaudeville stage. It teaches Presidents how to rule, women how to win husbands, the Church how to save souls, and middle-aged gentlemen how to reduce weight by exercising ten minutes every day. It knows nearly everything and guesses at the rest. It will say almost anything and publish the rest at advertising rates. Without it, democratic government would be difficult and travelling in the Subway quite impossible. The newspaper is the only institution since the world began that succeeds in being all things to all men for the moderate sum of one cent a day. The only universal things that come cheaper, the professor told me, are birth and death.

IX

A FLEDGLING

A SOPHOMORE's soul is not the simple thing that most people imagine. I am thinking now of my nephew Philip and of our last meeting. This time, he was more than usually welcome. I was lonely. The family had just left town for the summer and the house was fearfully empty. I sat there, smoking a cigarette amid the first traces of domestic uncleanness, when I heard him on the stairs. The dear boy had not changed. Dropping his heavy suitcase anyways, he seized my hand within his own huge paw and squeezed it till the tears came to my eyes. His voice was a young roar. He threw his hat upon the table, thereby scattering a large number of papers about the room, and

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then sat down upon my own hat, which was lying on the armchair, on top of several July magazines. I had put my hat down on the chair instead of hanging it up, as I should have done, because the family was away and I was alone in the house.

Might he smoke? He was busy with his bulldog pipe and my tobacco jar before I could say yes. He explained that he was sorry, but he found he could neither read, write, nor think nowadays without his pipe. He admitted that he was the slave of a noxious habit, but it was too late, and he might as well get all the solace he could out of a pretty bad situation. But, as I look at Philip, I cannot help feeling that his fine colour and the sparkle in his blue eyes and his full count of nineteen years make the situation far less desperate than he portrays it. Philip is not a handsome lad, but he will be a year from now. At present he is mostly hands

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and feet, and his face shows a marked nasal development. Before Philip has completed his junior year, the rest of his features will have reasserted themselves, and the harmony of lineament which was his when he was an infant, as his mother never tires of regretfully recalling, will be restored. Until that time Philip must be content to carry the suggestion of an attractive and eager young bird of prey.

Philip lights pipe after pipe as he dilates on his experiences since last I saw him. The moralising instinct is very weak in me. I cannot find it in my heart to censure Philip's constant mouthing of the pipe. I, too, smoke, and I am not foolish enough to risk my standing with Philip by preaching where I do not practise. Besides, I observe that the boy does not inhale, that his pipe goes out frequently, and that his consumption of matches is much greater than his consumption of

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tobacco. So I say nothing in reproof of his pipe.

But it is different with his language. Philip, I observe regretfully, is profane. I am not mealy-mouthed myself. There are moments of high emotional tension when silence is the worst form of blasphemy. But Philip is profane without discrimination. His supply of unobjectionable adjectives would be insufficient to meet the needs of the ordinary kindergarten conversation. He uses the same swift epithet to describe certain brands of tobacco, the weather on commencement day, the food at his eating-house, his professors of French and of mathematics, the spirit of the incoming freshman class, and the outlook for "snap" courses during the coming year.

It is not my moral but my æsthetic sense that takes offence, so I ask Philip whether it is the intensity of his feelings that makes it impossible

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for him to discuss his work or his play without continual reference to the process of perdition and the realm of lost souls ; or whether it is habit. No sooner have I put my question than I am sorry. There is nothing the young soul is so afraid of as of satire. It can understand being petted and it can understand being whipped ; but the sting behind the smile, the lash beneath the caress, throws the young soul into helpless panic. It feels itself baited and knows not whither it may flee. I have always thought that the worst type of bully is the teacher in school or in college who indulges a pretty talent for satire at the expense of his pupils. It is a cowardly and a demoralising practice. It means not only hitting some one who is powerless to retort, it means confusing the sense of truth in the adolescent mind. Here is some one quite grown up who smiles and means to hurt you, who says good and means bad, who

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says yes and means no. The young soul stares at you and sees the standards of the universe in chaos about itself.

And I feel all the more guilty in Philip's case because I know that the lad speaks only a mechanical lingo which goes with his bull-dog pipe and the aggressive shade of his neckwear and his socks. The very pain and alarm my question raises in him shows well enough that his soul has kept young and clear amid his world of "muckers" and "grinds" and "cads" and "rotten sneaks," and all the men and things and conditions he is in the habit of depicting in various stages of damnation. "Now, you're making fun of me," says Philip. "We fellows don't know how to pick out words that sound nice, but mean a—I beg your pardon—a good deal more than they say. Anyhow, I suppose, if I try from now on till doomsday I shall never be able to speak like you."

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Bless his young sophomore's soul! With that last sentence Philip has seized me hip and thigh and hurled me into an emotional whirlpool, where chills and thrills rapidly succeed each other. Because I am fifteen years older than Philip the boy invests me with a halo and bathes me in adoration. I am fifteen years older than he, I am bald, obscure, and far from prosperous, and there is unmistakably nothing about me to dazzle the youthful imagination. Yet the facts are as I have stated them. Philip likes to be with me, copies me without apparently trying to, and has chosen my profession—so he has often told me—for his own. I am pretty sure that he has made up his mind when he is as old as I am to smoke the same brand of rather mediocre tobacco which I have adopted for practical reasons. I am sometimes tempted to think that Philip, at my age, intends to be as bald as I am.

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Hence the alternate thrills and chills. I am by nature restless under worship. The sense of my own inconsequence grows positively painful in the face of Philip's outspoken veneration. There are people to whom such tribute is as incense and honey. But I am not one of them. I have tried to be and have failed. I have argued with myself that, after all, it is the outsider who is the best judge; that we are most often severest upon ourselves; that if Philip finds certain high qualities in me, perhaps there is in me something exceptional. I even go so far as to draw up a little catalogue of my acts and achievements. I can recall men who have said much sillier things than I have ever said, and published much worse stuff than I have ever written. I repeat to myself the rather striking epigram I made at Smith's house last week, and I go back to the old gentleman from Andover who two years ago told me that there

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was something about me that reminded him of Oliver Wendell Holmes. By dint of much trying I work myself up into something of a glow; but it is all artificial, cerebral, incubated. The exaltation is momentary, the cold chill of fact overtakes me. There is no use in deceiving one's self. Philip is mistaken. I am not worthy.

But that day Philip rallied nobly to the situation. My little remark on strong language had hurt him, but he saw also that I was sorry to have hurt him, and he was sorry for me in turn. "I don't in the least mind your telling me what you think about the way we fellows talk," he said. "That's the advantage of having a man for one's friend, he is not afraid of telling you the truth even if it hurts. And then, if you wish to, you can fight back. You can't do that with a woman."

"Have you found that out for yourself!" I asked him.

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He looked at me to see if again I was resorting to irony. But this time he found me sincere.

“Women!” Philip sniffed. “I have found it doesn’t pay to talk seriously to a woman. There is really only one way of getting on with them, and that’s jollyng them. And the thicker you lay it on, the better.” He put away his pipe and proffered me a cigarette. “I like to change off now and then. I have these made for me in a little Russian shop I discovered some time ago. They draw better than any cigarette I have ever smoked. Of course, there are women who are serious and all that. There are a lot in the postgraduate department and some in the optional literature courses. But you ought to see them! And such grinds. None of us fellows stands a ghost of a chance with them. They take notes all the time and read all the references and learn them by heart. You

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can't jolly *them*. They wouldn't know a joke if you led them up to one and told them what it meant. I think coeducation is all played out, don't you? Home is the only place for women, anyhow. Do you like your cigarette?"

The Patient Observer, it may possibly have been gathered before this, is somewhat of a sentimentalist. He liked his cigarette very well, but through the blue haze he looked at Philip and could not help thinking of the time—only two short years ago—when he, the Patient Observer, with his own eyes saw Philip borrow a dollar from his mother before setting out for an ice-cream parlour in the company of two girl cousins. The Patient Observer has changed little in the last two years; his hair may be a little thinner and his knowledge of doctors' bills a little more complete. But in Philip of to-day he found it hard to recognise the Philip of two years ago. And the marvels of the law

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of growth which he thus saw exemplified moved the Patient Observer to throw open the gates of pent-up eloquence. He lit his pipe and began to discourse to Philip on the world, on life, and on a few things besides.

And when it was time for both of us to go to bed, Philip stood up and said, "I wish I came every day. You don't know what a bore it is, listening to that drool the 'profs' hand you out up there." His fervent young spirit would not be silent until, with one magnificent gesture, he had swept the tobacco jar to the floor and shattered two electric lamps. Then he went to his room and left me wondering at the vast mysteries that underlie the rough surface of the sophomore's soul.

X

THE COMPLETE COLLECTOR—I

"I HAVE given up books and pictures," said Cooper. "I now devote myself entirely to collecting samples of the world's wisdom."

"Proverbs, do you mean?" I asked.

"No, but the facts on which proverbs are based. You see, I grew tired of pictures when it got to be a question of bidding against millionaires for the possession of spurious old masters. The break came when Downes proved that my Velasquez was painted in 1896. His own, it turned out, was done in 1820; but even then, you see, he had the advantage over me. So I concentrated on books. But I could not resist the temptation of glancing through my first editions now and then, and the pages be-

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gan to give way. Then I tried Chinese porcelains. There, again, I had to compete against Downes, who ordered his agent to buy two hundred thousand dollars' worth of Chinese antiquities for the Louis XIV. room in his new Tudor palace. And, besides, this rather disconcerting thing happened: I had as my guest a mandarin who was passing through New York on his way to Europe, and I showed him my collection of jades. 'There was only one collection like this in China some years ago,' I told him. 'Yes,' he replied, 'it was in my house when the foreign troops entered Peking in 1900.' So I decided to sell my porcelains.

"But of course I had, as you say, to collect something, and for a long time I could think of no field in which a cultivated taste and personal effort could make way against the competition of mere brute millions. And then, all at once, I hit upon proverbs. The suggestion came in

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a rather peculiar fashion. It seems that there was an eccentric old poet on Long Island who spent many years in collecting all sorts of inanimate freaks, odds and ends, and rubbish. When he died they found among his treasures a purse made out of a sow's ear and a whistle made from a pig's tail. I saw my opportunity at once. The eccentric old man, by acquiring two such extraordinary *objets d'art* had indulged himself in a sneer at the world's proverbial wisdom. I would come to the rescue of our threatened stock of experience by gathering the facts that upheld it. I would make it, besides, more than the selfish hobby of the private collector who gives the world only a very little share of the pleasure he tastes. I would make my collection a museum and a laboratory. Instead of reading about the wise ant and the busy bee people should come and see them in the life. It was the difference between reading

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about animals in a book and seeing them in the life."

"And have you succeeded?" I asked.

"Beyond all expectations," he replied. "Come, I will take you through my galleries," and he showed the way into the queerest garden I have ever seen. It was as if a menagerie and a museum had been brought together in the open air. Between enclosures and cages which harboured animals of all species, ran long tables supporting glass cases like those used for exhibiting coins or rare manuscripts.

"Now here," he said, stopping before a small chest with a glass top, "here is my collection of straws."

"Straws?" I said.

"Yes. It is small but select. Here, for instance, is the last straw that broke the camel's back. Some one suggests that it must have been a Merry Widow hat, but that's jesting, of

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course. This again is the straw that showed which way the wind blew and enabled a politician to change sides and get a reputation as a reformer. We will see the politician further on." I noticed then for the first time that the iron-barred cages contained human beings as well as beasts. "Here is a handful of straws which an entire conference of theologians spent three months in splitting. This," pointing to a little mannikin about four inches high, "is the man of straw whose defeat in debate gave one of our United States Senators his brilliant reputation. And this, finally, is a handful of straws out of the pile on which Jack Daw slept when he gave up his bed to buy his wife a looking-glass, or, as some one has suggested, an automobile.

"And now observe the advantages of my method. The student, having been shown the straw that broke the camel's back, will, if he is a cautious student, well drilled in the methods

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of modern research, demand to see the camel. Well, here it is," and Cooper turned toward a large enclosure where several members of the family *Camelidæ* were peacefully browsing, with the exception of one that lay in a corner with drooping head and closed eyes, apparently lifeless. "It's been hard work, of course, and expensive, keeping a broken-backed camel alive, but, encouraged by such examples of the remarkable vitality of animals as may be seen for instance in the Democratic donkey, I have persisted and succeeded. This rather thin-legged creature near the fence is the camel that tried to pass through the needle's eye, and the one close beside him is the one swallowed by the man who strained at a gnat. Harrington asserts that he has never been able to see how either phenomenon is possible, but the problem is only half as difficult as it appears. For it is evident that if a camel were small enough to

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pass through the eye of a needle, there would be comparatively little trouble in swallowing him. And, speaking of needles, it has been a constant regret that my collection is still without a needle found in a haystack."

I have not the space to enumerate one tithe of what Cooper showed me. As we hurried past the cages containing numerous specimens of *Homo Sapiens*, he contented himself with pointing out a physician who had failed to cure himself by psycho-therapeutics; a shoemaker who by sticking to his last failed to become a railroad president, though in the course of time he could tell where every man's shoe pinched; an importer who, in defiance of the Pure Food law, put new wine into old bottles, and labelled them Bordeaux; and a harmless-looking man of middle age, who continued to smile and smile, and had played Iago, Macbeth, and Hamlet's uncle. Before a sturdy-looking man dressed in working-

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clothes Cooper stopped for a moment and said,
“ Mr. C. W. Post and Mr. James Farley assure
me that this is the rarest item in my collection.”

“ Who is he? ” I asked.

“ It is a union labourer who is worthy of his
hire,” Cooper said.

XI

THE EVERLASTING FEMININE

I AM convinced that the easiest business in the world must be the writing of epigrams on Woman. I have been reading, of late, in a new volume of "Maxims and Fables." It came to me with the compliments of the author, in lieu of a small debt which he has kept outstanding for several years. Although the writer contradicts himself on every third or fourth page, I am justified in calling the book a very able bit of work for the reason that the ordinary book on this subject contradicts itself on every other page. No one who glances through this volume will fail to understand why the psychology of Woman should be a favourite subject with very young and very light thinkers. It is the only

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form of literature that calls for absolutely no equipment in the author. Writing a play, for instance, presupposes some acquaintance with a few plays already written. No one can succeed as a novelist without a fair knowledge of the technique of millinery or a tolerable mastery of stock exchange slang. The writer of scientific articles for the magazines must have fancy, and the writer of advertisements must have poetry and wit. But to produce a book of epigrams on Woman requires nothing but an elementary knowledge of spelling and the courage necessary to put the product on the market.

The secret of the thing is so simple that it would be a pity to keep it from the comparatively few persons who have failed to discover it. It consists entirely in the fact that whatever one says about Woman is true. And not only that, but every statement that can possibly

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be made on the subject is sure to ring true, which is much better even than being true. On every other subject under the sun there is always one opinion which sounds a little more convincing than every other opinion. There are, for example, people who insist that birds of a feather do not necessarily flock together more frequently than birds of a different feather do; and they will assert that if you step on a worm with real firmness the chances of his turning are much less than if you did not step on him at all. Nevertheless, there is undeniably a truer ring about the assertion that birds do flock together than about the assertion that they do not, and we accept more readily the worm that turns than the worm that remains peaceful under any provocation. But this is not the case with aphorisms about the gentler sex. There, everything sounds as plausible as everything else.

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Let me be specific. Right at the beginning of the volume to which I have alluded, I came across the following apothegm: "Long after Woman has obtained the right to vote she will continue to face the wrong way when she steps from a street-car." "How true," I said to myself. Well, a few days later, while glancing through the pages at the end of the volume, my eye fell on the following lines: "Now that Woman is learning to face the right way when she steps from a street-car, she has demonstrated her right to the ballot." "How true." But I had scarcely expressed my approval when it occurred to me that I had read the same thing elsewhere in the book. And when I searched out the earlier passage and compared the two and found that they did not say the same thing, but quite the opposite thing, it did not seem to make a very great difference after all. They both sounded plausible. I recited one sentence

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aloud and then the other, and they rang equally true; and the more I repeated them the truer they rang.

Delighted with my chance discovery I proceeded to make a thorough study of "Maxims and Fables" with the object of bringing together the author's widely scattered observations on the same topic under their appropriate heads. The work went slowly at first; but after a little while I found I could pick out a maxim and turn almost instinctively to one that directly contradicted it. The occupation is fascinating as well as instructive. It sheds a new light on the conditions of human knowledge and the workings of the human mind. Consider, if you will, the following half-dozen sentences that I succeeded in compiling in less than ten minutes. They all deal with the question of a woman's age:

"A woman is as old as she looks.

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“A woman is as old as she says.

“A woman is as old as she would like to be.

“A woman is as old as the only man that counts would have her be.

“A woman is as old as any particular situation requires.

“A woman is as old as her dearest woman friends say she is.”

Let any one read these maxims to himself quietly, and admit that not only would each of them impress him as true if found standing by itself, but that they all ring quite as true when taken together. But that is by no means all. It may be shown that if all these propositions are true, taken singly or together, the negative of each and all of these propositions is also true. Thus:

“A woman is seldom as old as she looks.

“A woman is never as old as she says.

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"No woman is just the age she would like to be.

"A woman is rarely as old or as young as the one man that counts would have her be.

"Few women are ever of the age that a particular situation requires.

"No woman is as old as her dearest woman friends say she is."

How all these opposites can be equally true, I will not undertake to explain. It is probably inherent in the very nature of the subject. The French, a people wise in experience, knew what they were about when they laid it down that if you have a mystery to solve, you must look for the woman. What they meant was, that, having found a woman, you may make any statements you please about her; the world will accept them unquestioningly and your puzzle will consequently be solved.

Sometimes, however, it has seemed to me

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that a possible reason for this very curious fact may be found in the established fashion of speaking about men as individuals and about women as a class and a type. And that class or type we saddle with all the faults and virtues of all its individual members. When Smith tells me that his automobile cost him three times as much as I know he has paid for it, I record my impressions by telling Jones as soon as I meet him that the man Smith is an incorrigible liar. But when Mrs. Smith tells me that her family is one of the oldest in Massachusetts, which I have every reason to believe is not so, I invariably say to myself or to some one else, "A woman's appreciation of the truth is like her appreciation of music; she likes it best when she closes her eyes to it."

Or Smith may be a very straightforward man, given to plain-speaking, and when you ask him how he liked your last dinner he may say

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that in his opinion the wine was better than the conversation. In that case you will probably tell your wife that Smith has shown himself to be an insufferable ass, and that you have decided to cut his acquaintance. But when Mrs. Smith tells you that your expensive dinners are rather beyond what a man of your modest income should go in for, you merely writhe and smile; only on the train the next day you will say to Harrington, "Has it ever occurred to you that a woman loves the truth, not because it is the truth, but because it hurts? Take a cigarette."

For these reasons I would urge every one who can possibly find time, to write a book of maxims about Woman, provided he has not done so already. In the first place, as I have shown, it is an easy and delightful occupation, which, for that very reason, is in danger of becoming overcrowded. But there is another reason for

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losing no time in the matter. Now and then I have the foreboding that some day in the near future the world may suddenly lose its habit of believing that, where women are concerned, two and two are four and are not four at the same time. And then there will be no more writing of epigrams on Woman. For it is evident that there can be no point to an epigram if its assertions must be qualified. The situation will become impossible when students of psychology, instead of writing, "Woman likes the truth for the same reason that she likes olives—to satisfy a momentary craving," will be compelled to write, "Some women tell the truth, and some women do not," "Some women mean yes when they say no, and some women mean no," "Some women think with their hearts, and some think with their minds." That little word "some" will settle the epigram writer's business, and an interesting form of literature will disappear.

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Not that in some respects its disappearance will fail to arouse regret. These books amused very many people in the writing, and they never did very much harm. And it is something to have a universal topic that every one can write on, just as it is stimulating to have a universal appetite like eating, or a universal accomplishment like walking. How many other subjects besides Woman have we on which the schoolboy and the sage can write with equal confidence, fluency, and approach to the truth? Possibly even women will regret that they are no longer the subject of universal comment. Who knows? A woman will forgive injury, but never indifference.

XII

THE FANTASTIC TOE

WHEN we reach the year 1910 [Harding dreamt he was reading in the *Weekly Review* for 1952], we find the art of dancing well on its way toward establishing itself as the predominant mode of expression. The next few years marked a tremendous advance. The graceful *danseuses* who interpreted Mendelssohn's "Spring Song," Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony, and Shakespeare's "Tempest" were the pioneers of a vast movement. We can do nothing better than recall a few typical public performances given in New York during the season of 1912-13.

In a splendid series of matinées extending over two months, Professor William P. Jones

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danced the whole of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." The first two volumes were danced in slow time, to the accompaniment of two flutes and a lyre. The poses were statuesque rather than graceful, and the gestures had in them a great deal of the antique. But, beginning with the story of the barbarian invasions in the third volume, Professor Jones's interpretation took on a fury that was almost bacchantic. The sack of Rome by the Vandals in the year 451 was pictured in a veritable tempest of gyrations, leaps, and somersaults. The subtle and hidden meanings of the text called for all the resources of the Professor's eloquent legs, arms, shoulders, lips, and eyes. A certain obscure passage in the life of Attila the Hun, which had long been a puzzle to students of Gibbon, was for the first time made clear to the average man when Professor Jones, standing on one foot,

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whirled around rapidly in one direction for five minutes, and then, instantly reversing himself, spun around for ten minutes in the opposite direction.

In the ballroom of the Hotel Taftoftia, during Christmas week, William K. Spriggs, Ph.D., held a number of fashionable audiences spellbound with his marvellously lucid dances in Euclid and Algebra up to Quadratics. Perhaps the very acme of the Terpsichorean art was attained in the masterly fluency of body and limbs with which Mr. Spriggs demonstrated that the sum of the angles in any triangle is equal to two right angles. In Pittsburg Mr. Spriggs is said to have moved an audience to tears when, by an original combination of the Virginia reel, the two-step, and the Navajo snake dance, he showed that if $x^2 + y^2 = 25$ and $x^2 - y^2 = 25$, x equals 5 and y equals zero. All the pride and selfishness of

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x , all the despair of y , were mirrored in the dancer's play of features. The spectators could not help pondering over the seeming law of injustice that rules the world. Why should x be everything in the equations and y nothing? Why should y 's nonentity be used even to set off the all importance of x ? But they found no answer. On the other hand, a large number of college freshmen who had failed on their entrance mathematics found no difficulty in passing off their conditions after attending three performances of Mr. Spriggs's dance.

We can give only the briefest mention to an entire school of experts and scientists who helped to make the season of 1912-13 memorable in the annals of the greatest of all arts. For a solitary illustration we may take Mr. Boom, who, at the annual meeting of the American Zoölogical Association, danced his monumental two-volume work entitled, "The

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Variations of the Alimentary Canal in the Frogs and Toads." This dance was subsequently repeated before several crowned heads of Europe.

An event of more than ordinary interest was the debate between Senators Green and Hammond on the question whether the United States should establish a protectorate over Central America. Senator Green danced for the affirmative and Senator Hammond danced for the negative. Both gentlemen had an international reputation. Senator Green's war-dance in the Senate on the Standard Oil Company is still spoken of in Washington as the most striking rough-and-tumble exhibition of recent years. Senator Hammond is an exponent of a style which lays greater stress on finesse than on vigour. In a single session of the Senate he is said to have sidestepped nearly a dozen troublesome roll-calls without arous-

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ing any appreciable dissatisfaction among his constituents. Before a popular jury, however, Senator Green's Cossack methods were likely to carry greater conviction. And that is what happened in the great debate we have referred to. Senator Hammond appeared on the platform in a filmy costume made up of alternate strips of the Constitution of the United States and the Monroe Doctrine. Wit, sarcasm, irony followed one another in quick succession over his mobile features and fairly oozed from his fingers and toes. Yet it was evident that while he could appeal to the minds of the spectators he had no power to sway their emotions. It was different with Senator Green. A thunderous volume of applause went up the moment he appeared on the stage, booted and spurred and heavily swathed in American flags. His triumph was a foregone conclusion. The scene that ensued when Senator Green concluded his

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argument by leaping right over the table and pouring himself out a glass of ice-water on the way, simply beggars description.

No one to-day can possibly foresee [wrote the critic of the *Weekly Review*] to what heights the dance, as the expression of all life, will be carried. We can only call attention to the plans recently formulated by one of our leading publishers for a library of the world's best thought, to be issued at a price that will bring it within the reach of people of very moderate means. The library will consist of bound volumes of photographs showing the world's greatest dancers in their interpretation of famous authors. Twenty young women from the Paris and St. Petersburg conservatories of dancing have already been engaged. Among other works they will dance the Psalms and Ecclesiastes, the second book of the Iliad, "Ædipus the King," the fifth Canto of Dante's

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“Inferno,” Spinoza’s “Ethics,” “Hamlet,”
Rousseau’s “Confessions,” “Mother Goose,”
Tennyson’s “Brook” and the “Charge of the
Light Brigade,” Burke’s “Speech on Concilia-
tion,” “Alice in Wonderland,” the “Pickwick
Papers,” the Gettysburg Address, Darwin’s
“Origin of Species,” and Mr. Dooley.

XIII

ON LIVING IN BROOKLYN

PERHAPS the principal charm about living in Brooklyn lies in the fact that strangers can find their way there only with extreme difficulty. The streets in Brooklyn are to me a perpetual source of joy and wonderment. Like the city itself, they have kept the slow-paced habits of a former age. No city is more easy to be lost in, and Brooklyn is at all times full of people from across the river, who ask the way to Borough Hall. For that matter, one may easily be lost on Staten Island, where the inhabitants are reputed to pass the pleasant summer evenings in guiding strangers to the trolley lines. But a person naturally expects to lose his bearings on Staten Island. On the

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other hand, to be lost in Brooklyn irritates as well as confuses. It is like starving in the midst of plenty. One always has the choice of half a dozen surface cars, but one is always sure to be directed to the wrong one.

So I repeat: Brooklyn's tangled streets serve their highest purpose in safeguarding its inhabitants against the unwelcome visitor. Because of our American good nature we are always inviting people to call; and when they accept we immediately feel sorry. It is a law with us that if two utterly unsympathetic persons meet by chance at the house of a common friend, they shall insist on having each other to dinner on the following two Sundays. Or, again, you may be shaking hands with a very dear friend in the presence of a third person whom you dislike. And you are extremely anxious to have your friend come up for tea

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on Sunday, and you cannot do it without asking the other man.

Under such circumstances, it is well to live in Brooklyn. All you need say then to the person you have an aversion for is: "I should be delighted to have you call on us Sunday afternoon. We live in Brooklyn, you know, at No. 125 Bowdoin Place." You may then go home in peace, confident that your undesired visitor will never find you. At eight o'clock on Sunday night he will be wearily asking a policeman on Flatbush Avenue what the shortest way is to Borough Hall. Long before that he will have given up hope of finding No. 125 Bowdoin Place. His only object is to get home before midnight. Now it is plain that such an excellent defence against unpleasant people is unavailable in Manhattan. Ask a man to look you up at No. 952 West One Hundred and Twelfth Street, and though your heart

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loathes him, you shall not escape. But in Brooklyn you are safe until the moment your doorbell actually rings. For even if your visitor should find Bowdoin Place, many streets in Brooklyn have two, three, or four systems of numbering. Some will maintain that it is not rigidly honest to give a stranger your Brooklyn address without giving him detailed directions for finding his way from the station, illustrating your argument with a sketch map. But there will always be Puritan consciences.

As a matter of fact, some of the kindest and most enlightened people I know live in Brooklyn. And I cannot see why that in itself should make them a subject for general satire. I have been told that a professor at Harvard has recently made the calculation that the drama and the art of conversation in America would be poorer by 33 1-3 per cent. if the joke about living in Brooklyn were to disappear. When a

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visitor from Brooklyn drops in unexpectedly at a Harlem flat, the proper thing for the host to say is, "Well, well, what a task it must have been to find your way out," and when the visitor starts for home his host remarks, "Sorry you can't stay; but we all know how it is—in the midst of life you are in Brooklyn. Good-night."

Of course I don't mean to deny that the people who live in Brooklyn are themselves largely responsible for the perpetuation of the silly jest. They subscribe to it in a spirit of meekness that is characteristically local. Ask a man from Cherry Springs or Binghamton where is his home and he will quietly say, Cherry Springs or Binghamton, as the case may be. But the resident of Brooklyn is apologetic from the start. He anticipates criticism by saying, "Well, you know, *I* live in Brooklyn," and he looks at you in tremulous expectation of

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the usual condolences. If by any chance one should omit the traditional reply, the man from Brooklyn begins to fear the worst. On both sides of the East River the principle seems to be accepted that inasmuch as there are places like Cherry Springs or Binghamton there must be people who live in them, but that it is by definition impossible to bring forward a valid reason why one should live in Brooklyn.

The question is really a complicated one. Harlem's disapproval of Brooklyn is not of a piece with Harlem's disapproval of localities outside itself. Living in Brooklyn is something utterly different from living in New Jersey or the Bronx. New Jersey and the Bronx are so entirely out of the ordinary that they call for no explanation. Living there has at least the merit of originality. A great poet might choose to live in the Bronx. Minor poets have been known to commute across the Hudson.

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But Brooklyn cannot be dismissed so easily. She is too big, too close, and, for all her timidity, too contented. Her people come under the head of those who ought to know better and do not try. Thus, while living in New Jersey is a matter of taste, and living in the Bronx is a matter of necessity, living in Brooklyn is a matter of habit.

And a fine, rich, ripe old habit it is, and a precious thing in a modern, shouting world that has no habits but only impulses and vices. Let me confess: I like Brooklyn, and I like to dream of going to live there some day. And possibly I would go if it were not for the desire of keeping the project before me as one of the few ideals I have retained in life. I like Brooklyn's shapeless rotundity as contrasted with our abominable rectangular distances in Manhattan. I like it because it sprawls low against the ground instead of clawing up into the sky.

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Manhattan is solid with brick and steel from river to river. Brooklyn ambles on peacefully till it comes to a region of sand lots or a marsh or a creek, and stops. Half a mile further on it resumes its gentle dreams of progress and wanders north, or south, or east, as the fancy seizes it. It runs into blind corners, it debouches upon ravines and woodland strips, it hears the echoes of ocean on the beaches. It is leisure; it is peace; it is Brooklyn.

At the same time it is well to remember that Brooklyn is something more than a geographical fact. Brooklyn describes a scheme of life and a condition of the mind. The life there is like a page from yesterday. People who live in Brooklyn organise reading circles. They attend lectures on the Wagnerian music drama. They have retained progressive euchre and the strawberry festival as essential ingredients of religion. They are extremely fond of going

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on long excursions into the country in early spring. They make it a habit to walk across the bridge on their way home in the evening, and they speak with great feeling of the beautiful effect when New York's high buildings flash into banked masses of flame in the falling dusk. People who live in Brooklyn take pride in keeping up old friendships and in dressing without ostentation. There are old gentlemen who use only the ferries in coming to New York, because they regard the bridges as a novelty open to the suspicion of being unsafe.

And yet, as I have said, Brooklyn is rather a condition than a concrete fact. I believe every great Babylon has its neighbouring Brooklyn. London has it; Boston has it; Paris has it; even Chicago has it. And the line of demarcation between what is Brooklyn and what is not Brooklyn is not always a sharp one. There are many people in Manhattan who

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at heart are residents of Brooklyn. Such people, though they live in Harlem, avoid the express trains in the Subway on account of the crush. They visit the Museum of Natural History on Sunday and the Metropolitan Museum of Art on legal holidays and extraordinary occasions. They cross the Hudson and walk on the Palisades. They bring librettos to the opera and read them in the dark, thus missing a great deal of what passes on the stage. On the other hand, you will find people in Brooklyn whose spirit is totally alien to the place. They want to boost Brooklyn and boom it and push it and make it the most important borough in Greater New York, and develop its harbour facilities, and establish a great university, and double the assessed value of real estate within five years. Such people are in Brooklyn, but not of it.

And that is why Brooklyn has so strong a

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hold on me. I like it because it has so many wonderful, valuable, common things in it. In Brooklyn there are people, churches, baby-carriages, bay-windows, butchers' boys carrying baskets and whistling, policemen who misdirect strangers, vacant lots where boys play baseball, small tradesmen, overhead trolleys, quiet streets tucked away between parallel lines of clanging elevated railway, an Institute of Arts, and old gentlemen who write letters to the newspapers. I like Brooklyn because it hasn't the highest anything, or the biggest anything, or the richest anything in the world.

XIV

PALLADINO OUTDONE

HARDING spent one long winter night in reading the report of a select committee of the Society for Psychical Recreation which placed on record no less than half a dozen absolutely authenticated cases of material objects being moved through space by some mysterious agency other than physical. The report, as it took shape in Harding's dreams that night, was as follows:

In the first experiment the medium was an ordinary American citizen. The precautions against the slightest bodily movement on his part were perfect. Mr. Joseph G. Cannon planted both of his feet on the medium's left foot and seized his left hand in both his own. Senator Aldrich did the same on the other side.

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The Honourable Sereno E. Payne grasped the medium by the throat, the Honourable John Dalzell straddled on his chest, Senator Burrows of Michigan strapped his ankles to the chair, and Senator Scott of West Virginia thrust a gag into his mouth. As a further precaution, before the séance began, a representative of the Sugar Trust went through the medium's pockets. The medium struggled and groaned and made other signs of distress, but at all times remained under absolute control. Yet it is a fact that, in spite of all restraints imposed upon him, this ordinary American citizen did succeed in raising a family of two sons and a daughter and even in sending the eldest child to college. At various times one even caught sight of a loaf of bread or a pair of shoes sailing through the air, and once, for a moment, the Committee distinctly smelt roast turkey with cranberry sauce. At the end of the

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séance the medium was in a pitiful state of exhaustion, but declared that he was quite ready to go on.

In the second experiment the Committee made use of the Mayor of one of our large cities and of the boss of the party to which the Mayor belonged. The boss acted as medium, being securely strapped into a chair about three feet away from another chair, on which the Mayor was sitting, blindfolded. Again the standard precautions against fraud were gone through, but this time the medium's efforts met with almost immediate response. At the merest droop of the boss's right eyelid, the Mayor leaped up from his chair and turned completely around. The boss smiled faintly, whereupon the Mayor balanced himself for 3 minutes and 42 seconds on his right foot and for 2 minutes and 35 seconds on his left foot, and then began to run about the room on all-fours in an

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amusing imitation of a spaniel fetching and carrying for his master. The boss inserted the point of his tongue into his cheek and withdrew it again, repeating the process several times in rapid succession. In response, the Mayor's face went into a series of spasmodic smiles and frowns that aroused general laughter. At the conclusion of the performance, the boss gently clicked his tongue against his palate, and the Mayor promptly stood on his head in the middle of the floor.

A somewhat similar experiment was concerned with a magazine editor and a life-size mannikin made up to resemble a muckraker. The editor and the lay figure sat facing in opposite directions at a distance of about ten feet. The editor, who acted as medium, was holding the telephone receiver with one hand and signing checks with the other, so that there could be no question of manual manipulation on his

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part. Neither could his feet come into play, because they were in full view on his desk. The telepathy hypothesis was eliminated because, in the first place, the mannikin had no mind, of course, and in the second place, the editor changed his own mind so fast that no external mind could possibly keep up with it. The results were gratifying. The editor took a slip of paper and wrote a few words upon it. Immediately the stuffed figure began to shout, "Murder! Fire! Thieves! Help! Murder! Fire! Thieves! Help! Murder!" at intervals of two seconds. The editor wrote something on another slip of paper, and the mechanical figure went through a most complex series of movements. First it seized a pair of paint brushes and began to paint all the white objects in the room black and all the black objects white. Then it went through the motions of playing, for a few minutes, upon a typewriter. Then it seized a pair

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of shears and set to work clipping solid pages from books and magazines. Then it copied a long column of figures from an almanac and added them up wrong. Then it drew a memory sketch of an English statesman, and put the wrong name under it. The editor assured the Committee that he could continue the process for hours at will.

An excellent séance was one in which the medium was a man very near the top in American finance. The rest of the group forming the circle around the table were plain American citizens of the type described in the first experiment. The medium was securely roped in his chair with anti-Trust laws, anti-rebating laws, insurance laws, banking laws, franchise laws, etc. Yet no sooner were the lights turned down than the phenomena began. John Smith, on the right of the medium, suddenly felt a sharp blow on the neck. As he turned around

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instinctively a ghostly hand snatched away his pocket-book and the sound of mocking laughter could be plainly heard from the dark cabinet. Another weird hand pulled Thomas Jones's insurance policy out of his breast-pocket, dangled it in the air just out of his reach, and then flung it back at him. Later when Jones looked at his policy he found that its face value had been cut down one-half. James Robinson all at once began to feel his shoe pinch, and could not discover the reason until he, too, caught sight of a ghostly hand hovering in the vicinity of his pocket. Soon the room was filled with a veritable chaos of flying objects. Railroads, steamship lines, national banks, trust companies, insurance companies, went hurtling through the air, but all the time our financier sat motionless in his chair. It was suggested that the force which set such ponderous objects into motion was

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the mysterious element known as "executive ability."

In the final experiment the subject was a popular novelist, who gave a most interesting exhibition of how a nation-wide reputation can be raised and supported without the slightest apparent reason. A painstaking examination by the Committee showed that he had concealed about him neither talent, nor imagination, nor knowledge of human nature, nor insight into life, nor an intimate acquaintance with the elements of English grammar. Nevertheless, before the eyes of the amazed observers, novel after novel went humming through the air in a direction away from the writer, while a steady stream of bank-books, automobiles, and country houses flowed in the opposite direction.

XV

THE CADENCE OF THE CROWD

I HAVE always been peculiarly susceptible to the music of marching feet. I know of no sound in nature or in Wagner that stirs the heart like the footsteps of the crowd on the board platform of the Third Avenue "L" at City Hall every late afternoon. The human tread is always eloquent in chorus, but it is at its best upon a wooden flooring. Stone and asphalt will often degrade the march of a crowd to a shuffle. It needs the living wood to give full dignity to the spirit of human resolution that speaks in a thousand pair of feet simultaneously moving in the same direction; and particularly when the moving mass is not an army, but a crowd advancing without rank or order. I am exceedingly fond of military parades; so fond that I

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repeatedly find myself standing in front of ladies of medium height who pathetically inquire at frequent intervals what regiment is passing at that moment. But it is not the blare of the brass bands I care for, or the clatter of cavalry, which I find exceedingly stupid, or even the rattle of the heavy guns, but the men on foot. Only when the infantry comes swinging by do I grow wild with the desire to wear a conspicuous uniform and die for my country. Saint-Gaudens's man on horseback in the Shaw memorial is beautiful, but it is the forward-lunging line of negro faces and the line of muskets on shoulder that threaten to bring the tears to my eyes.

This, I suppose, is rank sentimentality; but I cannot help it. Any procession, no matter how humble, puts me into a state of mingled exaltation and tearfulness. It is in part the sound of human footsteps and in part the solemn idea

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behind them. I am not thinking of stately processions moving up the aisles of churches to the sound of music. I have in mind, rather, a band of, say, a thousand working girls on Labour Day, or of an Italian fraternal organisation heavy with plumes and banners, or even a Tammany political club on its annual outing; wherever the idea of human dependence and human brotherhood is testified to in the mere act of moving along the pavement shoulder to shoulder. Above all things, it is a line of marching children that takes me quite out of myself. I was a visitor not long ago at one of the public schools, and I sat in state on the principal's platform. When the bell rang for dismissal, and the sliding doors were pushed apart so as to form one huge assembly room, and the children began to file out to the sound of the piano, the splendour and the pathos of it overpowered me. I did not know which I wanted to be then,

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the principal in his magnificent chair of office, or one of those two thousand children keeping step in their march towards freedom.

Pathos? Why pathos in a little army of children marching out in fire drill, or the same children marching in for their morning's Bible reading and singing? I find it difficult to say why. Perhaps it is consciousness of that law which has raised man from the brute, and which I see embodied when we take a thousand children and range them in order and induce them to keep step. Perhaps the pathos is in the recognition of our isolated weakness and our need to make painful progress by getting close together and moving forward in close formation. In any case, the pathos is there. Consider a children's May party, on its way to Central Park. A fife-and-drum corps of three little boys in uniform leads the way. The Queen of the May, all in white, walks with her consort

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under a canopy of ribbons and flowers, a little stiffly, perhaps, and self-consciously, but not more so than older queens and kings on parade. A long line of boys and girls in many-coloured caps moves between flying detachments of mothers carrying baskets. The confectioner's wagon, laden with its precious commissariat of ice cream and cake, moves leisurely behind; for the confectioner's horse this is evidently a holiday. Is pathos conceivable in so delightful, so smiling, an event? Alas, I have watched May parties go by, and the serious little faces under the red and white caps have given me a heavier case of *Weltschmerz* than I have ever experienced at a performance of "Tristan und Isolde." It was the fact of those little children advancing in unison; that is the word. If they had trudged or scurried along, pell-mell, I should not have minded. But May parties move forward in procession, and the movement of a

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compact crowd is, to me, always heavy with pathos.

But no crowd is like the afternoon crowd upon the wooden platform of the "L" station at City Hall. I don't mean to be sentimental when I say that the sound is to me like the march of human civilisation and human history. Outwardly there is little to justify my grandiose comparison. You see only a heaving mass of men and women who are not very well clad. The men are unshaven, the women awry with a day's labour. They move on with that beautiful optimism of an American crowd which has been trained in the belief that there is always plenty of room ahead. There is very little pushing. Occasionally a band of young boys hustle their way through the crowd; but a New York crowd seems always to be mindful of the days when we were all of us boys. It is a reading public. The men carry newspapers whose flaring head-

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lines of red and green give a touch of almost Italian colour. The women carry cloth-bound novels in paper wrappers. But it is not an assemblage of poets or scholars or thinkers, or whatever class it is that is supposed to keep the world moving. It is that most solemn of all things—a city crowd on its way home from the day's work.

The footsteps keep up the tramp, tramp, on the board flooring, while train after train pulls out jammed within and without. The influx from the street allows no vacuum to be formed upon the platform. The patience of the modern man shows wonderfully. The tired workers face the hour's ride that lies between them and home with beautiful self-restraint and courage. And in their weariness and their patience lies the full solemnity of the scene. The morning crowd, even on the same wooden platform at City Hall, is different. The morning crowd is

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not so firmly knit together. You catch individual and local peculiarities. You feel that there are men and women here from Harlem, and others from Long Island, and others from Westchester and the Bronx. They are still fresh from their separate homes, with their separate atmospheres about them. Some are brisk from the morning's exercise and the cold bath; some are still a bit sleepy from last night's pleasures; some go to the day's task with eager anticipation; some move forward indifferent and resigned. But when these same men and women surge homeward in the evening, they are one in spirit; they are all equally tired. The city and the day's task have seized upon them and passed them through the same set of rollers and pressed out their differences and transformed them into a single mass of weary human material. The city has had its day's work out of them and now sends them home to recruit the

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new supply of energy that it will demand tomorrow. The unshaven men with their newspapers and the listless women with their paper-covered novels show ascetically tight-drawn faces, as if the day had been passed in prayer and supplication. I need not see those faces; I know they are there from the steady footfalls on the board platform. I overhear a young girl recounting what a perfectly lovely time she had last night, and how she simply couldn't stop dancing; but her foot drags a bit heavily and there sounds in her chatter and her vehemence the ground-tone of weariness.

It is not often that I hear the tramp of the late afternoon crowd upon the wooden platforms at City Hall. I find the sound of the crowd too solemn to be endured every day, and there is no comfort in the crush. I usually take pains to travel at an early hour when there are few people, and one is sure of a seat.

XVI

WHAT WE FORGET

THE importance of knowing who my Congressman is had never occurred to me until Professor Wilson Stubbs brought up the subject at a luncheon in the Reform Club. Professor Stubbs spoke on Civic Obligations. He argued that at the bottom of all political corruption lay the average citizen's personal indifference. "For instance," he said, "how many of the present know the name of the man who represents their district at Washington?" And it happened, while he waited for a reply, his eyes rested thoughtfully on me.

I grew red under his scrutiny. I tried my best to remember and failed. I did vaguely recall the lithographed presentment of a large

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clean-shaven man, with a heavy jaw. It hung in a barber-shop window between a blue-and-red poster announcing a grand masquerade and civic ball, and a papier-maché trout under a glass case. I could not bring back the man's name, although I was sure that his picture was inscribed on the top "Our Choice," and at the bottom he was characterised as somebody's friend—I could not recall whether he was the People's friend, or the Workingman's, or the Bronx's. I could not even make out his features, although, oddly enough, I could see the trout very distinctly. The fish, I recollected, had a peculiarly ferocious scowl, as if it resented the absurd blotches of green and gold with which the artist had attempted to imitate Nature's colour scheme. Gradually I found myself thinking of the trout as a member of Congress. Had I continued much longer, I should have visualised that fish in the act of address-

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ing the Speaker of the House on the tariff bill.

Yet I could not help taking the professor's implied criticism to heart. It would have been something even, to be able to tell whether I lived in the Eleventh Congressional District or the Fifteenth; but I didn't know. For how long a term was the man elected? I didn't know. Was it required that he should be able to read and write? I didn't know.

That was the beginning. When luncheon was over, I sat before the fire and tried to find out how much I did know of the things I should. I found myself staring into bottomless depths of ignorance. I tried to draw up a list of State Governors. I knew there must be between forty and fifty, but I could remember only three Governors, including our own; and later I recalled that one of the three was dead.

From death my mind leaped, oddly enough,

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to drownings. How should one go about resuscitating a man who has been pulled out of the river? He must be rolled on a barrel, of course; that much I remembered. But was it face down or face upward? And should his arms be pumped vertically up and down, or horizontally away from the body and back? Yes, and how if some intelligent foreigner were to ask me what our five principal cities were, in the order of population? It would be easy enough to begin, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia—and then? Was it Boston, or Baltimore, or San Francisco? I did not know.

There was no stopping now. I was fast in my own clutches. I bit at my cigar, and tried to call the roll of the seven wise men of Greece. I stopped at the first, Solon. He, I remembered, rescued the Athenians from misgovernment and slavery, and left the city before they

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could experience a change of heart and hang him.

Who were the nine muses? Well, there was Terpsichore—her disciples are spoken of every day in the newspapers. And then there was the muse of History, whose name possibly was Thalia, and the muse of Poetry, whose name I could not recall. I fared much better with the apostles: Peter and Paul, of course, and John and James, and Judas and Matthew, and Mark and Luke; eight out of twelve.

But of the seven wonders of the world I could cite with certainty only one, the Colossus of Rhodes. I was doubtful about Mount Vesuvius. I remembered not a single one of the seven deadly sins, and, at first, could place only two of the ten commandments—the ones on filial obedience and on the Sabbath. Later I thought of the newest realistic hit at the Park Theatre; that brought back one more commandment. On

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the other hand, it was a relief to call the three Graces straight off—Faith, Hope, and Charity.

I grew humble. I began to doubt if, after all, it is true that a modern schoolboy knows more than Aristotle did. In any case, whether Harrington's boy who is still in the grammar grades knows more than Aristotle, he certainly knows more than his father. They have a new-fashioned branch of study in the modern schools, which they call training the powers of observation. And that boy comes home with mischief in his soul, and asks Harrington which way do the seeds in an apple point. Harrington stares at the boy, and the boy smiles quizzically at Harrington, and the father grows suspicious. Are there seeds in an apple? There are seedless oranges, of course, which presupposes oranges not destitute of seeds; but an apple? Harrington tries to call up the image of the last apple he has eaten and he thinks

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of sweet and sour apples, apples of a waxen yellow and apples of a purple red, but he cannot visualise the seeds.

As Harrington sits there dumb, Jack asks him which shoe does he put on first when he dresses in the morning. Jack knows, the rascal. He can trace every process through which the cotton fibre passes from the plant to the finished cloth. He knows why factory chimneys are built high. He knows how a boat tacks against the wind. And he knows that his father knows nothing of these things.

But I would rather have Harrington's boy quiz me on things that I can pretend are not worth knowing, like the seeds in an apple, than on things that cannot be waved aside. I tried to explain one day how the revolution of the earth about the sun produces the seasons, and I succeeded only in proving that when it is winter in New York it is daylight in Buenos Ayres.

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Thereupon, Jack asked me what an unearned increment was. When I finished he said his teacher had told them that views like those I had just expressed were common among ill-informed people. The following day he came in and said to Harrington, "Papa, name six female characters in Dickens, in three minutes." Well, Harrington did, but it was a strain, and in order to make up the total he had to count in the anonymous, elderly, single woman whom Mr. Pickwick surprised in her bedroom. Jack insisted that, as she was nameless, it was not fair to call her a character, but Harrington put his foot down and refused to argue the matter.

And as I sit there before the fire, smiling over Harrington and Jack and myself, my cigar goes out, and I signal Thomas to bring me another. Thomas has the ascetic countenance of a tragedian, and the repose of an archbishop. Now, Thomas—and it comes to me with a

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shock—what do I know about Thomas, the man, as distinguished from the hired servant whom I have been aware of this year and more? Is he married or single? And if he is married, do his children resent their father's wearing livery? Does Thomas himself like to be a servant? Are there ideals and speculations behind that close-shaven mask? Has he any views on the future life? Has he ever thought on the subject of vivisection? Does he vote the Republican ticket? Does he earn a decent wage?

I could only answer, with an aching sense of isolation, with the wistful longing of one who looks into unfathomable depths, that I didn't know. Oh, Thomas, fellow man, brother! We have rubbed elbows for months and I do not know whether you are a man or only a lackey; whether you drink all night, or pray; whether you love me or hate me. How can you hold the cigar box so impassively, so single-mindedly?

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I said to myself that I would make amends to Thomas, that it was never too late. And, quietly, genially, I asked him, "How do you like your place here, Thomas?" Thomas grew uneasy, and smiled in a sickish fashion, and entreated me with his eyes to pick my cigar and let him go. But I was in the full swing of new-found righteousness. "There's nothing wrong, is there, Thomas?" And he replied, "I beg pardon, sir; but Henry's my name. Thomas was my predecessor. He left, you will remember, sir, a year ago last May." "But everybody calls you Thomas." "The gentlemen were used to the other name, sir."

Might Professor Wilson Stubbs be wrong, after all, I thought. Perhaps no one is really expected to know what everybody ought to know. I don't know the name of my Congressman. But neither do I know the name of my butcher and my grocer; and my butcher and

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my grocer can slay me with typhoid or ptomaines, whereas the utmost my Congressman can do is to misrepresent me. I don't know the man who makes my cigars; he may be consumptive. I don't know the critic who supplies me with literary opinions, and the scholar who gives me my outlook upon life. I don't know the man who lives next door. From the decent silence that reigns in his apartment, I gather that he does not beat his wife; but that is all. Yet he and I are supposed to be bound up in a community of interests. We both belong to the class whose income ranges from \$2,000 to \$4,000 a year, of which we spend 38 per cent. on food; and we raise an average of 2 2-3 children to the family, and are both responsible for the wide prevalence of musical comedy on the American stage. But I have seen my neighbour twice in the last three years.

So that was the end of it. And because it

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was late in the afternoon, I thought I would telephone to the office that I was not coming back. But for the life of me, I could not think of my telephone number; and Henry looked me up in the directory.

XVII

THE CHILDREN THAT LEAD US

THE mayor sat before his library fire and shivered, and kept wondering why there was no clause in the city charter prescribing a minimum of common sense for presidents of the Board of Education. A man thus qualified would know more than to suggest an increase of three million dollars for school sittings. The city's comptroller was crying bankruptcy; the newspapers were asserting that the mayor's nephew was head of a favoured contracting firm not entirely for his health; and the Board of Education wanted three million dollars. The mayor had a touch of fever. The steep rows of figures in the Education Board's memorandum curled up into little arabesques under his eyes,

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which were closing with fatigue. Only he did not wish to sleep. In the perfect stillness he could hear his own rapid heartbeat. The clatter of sleety rain against the windows made him restless.

If only O'Brien were here, O'Brien, who was a good chief of police, and a matchless personal aide-de-camp. They would then put on boots and oilskins and go out into the night on one of their frequent Harun-Al-Rashid expeditions. The mayor's wife? Yes, it is true that before leaving for the theatre she had cautioned him not to stir from the house. But she could not possibly have known how great was his need of a breath of air. But O'Brien was not here. Was it because he had just been appointed president of the Board of Education and comptroller in one and was a busy man? Perhaps. And yet a person might step to the telephone and ring up O'Brien if it were not that one's legs

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were weighted down with the weight of centuries and of dozens of new school buildings all in reinforced concrete. Was it concrete? The mayor was not quite sure, and he turned to ask O'Brien, who stood there at one side of the fireplace, erect and attentive.

"Do we go out to-night?" said the mayor.

"I should not advise it, your Honour," answered O'Brien. "You are not well enough. If it is adventure you would go in search of, I have here quite an extraordinary delegation of citizens who desire an interview with your Honour."

"Let us hear them, by all means," replied the mayor.

O'Brien drew aside the curtain which divided the library from the general reception room and there marched in, two abreast and maintaining precise step, a solemn line of children, who saluted the mayor gravely and ranged

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themselves in a semicircle across the room. As the mayor veered in his chair to face his visitors, a girl of some fifteen years stepped out of the line. She was still in her schoolgirl's dresses, but tall, with features of a fine, pensive cut and earnest eyes that were already peering from out the child's life into the opening doors of womanhood.

"May it please your Honour," she began, "we are a committee from the Central Bureau of Federated Children's Organisations and we have come here to protest against certain intolerable conditions of which our members are the victims."

Had they come in behalf of those additional three million dollars, the mayor wondered uneasily. "State the nature of your grievance," he said.

The leader of the delegation came a step nearer. "Your Honour, I can only attempt

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the merest outline of our general position. Several of my associates will take turns in acquainting you with the details of our case. Our complaint is that we, the children of this country, are being overworked. Formerly it was supposed to be the inalienable right of children to remain free from the cares of life. That theory has long been abandoned. The task of solving the gravest problems of existence has been thrust upon us, and every day that passes leaves us saddled with new responsibilities. But the limit of endurance has been reached at last. We feel that unless we protest now the whole structure of society—its economics, politics, art, and religion—will be shifted from the shoulders of the world's men and women to the shoulders of us children. I hope your Honour is willing to hear us."

"Of course, my dear," the mayor answered softly. He said, "My dear," and he said it

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tenderly because he had recognised in the speaker his own daughter Helen, whom he had supposed with her mother at the theatre.

“Step forward, Flora Binns,” said Helen, and Flora Binns, who was only eight, blue-eyed, and with ringlets of gold, approached and curtsied prettily. “May it please your Honour,” she said, “I am the delegate from Local No. 16 Children of Weak and Tempted Stage Mothers’ Union. We wish to place on record our opposition to the modern society drama, which so frequently throws the duty of supporting the climax of a play upon children under the age of ten. Although the playwrights are fond of showing that our papa is a brute and that our mamma is an angel, they invariably shrink from the logical conclusion that our mamma is right in planning to run away with the man who has offered her years of silent devotion. So the playwrights make one or two of us appear

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on the stage just in time to arouse in our mamma a sense of duty to her children and to prevent the elopement. Now we submit that the office of justifying our entire modern marriage fabric is too burdensome for us. Don't you think so, Mr. Mayor?"

"Why, yes," replied the mayor, thoughtfully.

"And they make use of us in other ways, sir. In fact, whenever the grown up persons in a play are in difficulties and the audience is beginning to yawn, the author sends us to the rescue. Why, only the other day we children saved a Wild West melodrama from utter failure. It took three of us to do it, but we succeeded." Flora curtsied, started back and returned. "And when I utter these sentiments, sir, I speak also for the Union of Precocious Magazine Children, which is represented here by Mary Sparks." Mary Sparks, a dark-haired miss with dancing eyes, bowed saucily.

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"Step out, Fritz Hackenschneider," said Helen, and flaxen-haired Fritz, radiantly holiday-like in his lustrously washed face and large, blue polka-dot tie, approached the mayor's chair.

"I don't have much to say, sir," he recited in a nervous, jerky voice. "I have been sent by the Fraternal Association of Comic Supplement Children. We wish to raise our voice against the almost universal conception that people can be made to laugh only when one of us hides a pin on the seat of grandpa's chair. The burden of an entire nation's humour is more than we can sustain. Thank you, sir," and he retired into the background, giving, as he passed, just one tug at Mary Sparks's hair and eliciting a suppressed scream.

"Mamie O'Farrell," called out Helen. The mayor found it impossible to decide whether Mamie was thirteen or twenty-five. She was

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very short and flat-chested, and the colour of her face in the firelight was like a dull cardboard. She wore a long, faded automobile cloak and an enormous black hat with a trailing green feather. On a gilt chain about her neck hung a locket in the form of a heart half as large as the one that beat uneasily within her. Mamie came forward reluctantly and saluted. Then she began to squirm from side to side and to shift from foot to foot, giggling in unfathomable embarrassment.

“Well,” said Helen, in a voice that was not at all unkind.

Mamie’s giggle grew worse. She seemed bent on snapping the massive gilt chain with twisting it back and forth, and finally gave up the whole case. “You tell it, Helen,” she begged. “I forgot wot I was goin’ t’ say. I’m scared poifectly stiff.”

Helen complied. “May it please your

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Honour, Mamie O'Farrell wants me to say that she represents the Amalgamated Union of Cash Girls and Juvenile Cotton Mill and Glass Factory Operatives. Mamie is fifteen. She works eleven hours a day and receives three and a half dollars a week. She passes two hours every day clinging to a strap in a crowded surface car. She carries her lunch in a paper bundle together with a copy of Laura M. Clay's novel entitled 'Irma's Ducal Lover.' Saturday nights, if her father has been strong enough to pass Murphy's saloon without opening his pay envelope, she goes to the theatre where the play is 'The Queen of the Opium Fiends.' Sometimes she attends a dance of the Friendship Circle, but as a rule she spends her nights at home reading the *Evening Yell*, which tells her that beauty is often a fatal gift and that there is danger in the first glass of champagne a young girl drinks. Am I telling your

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story in the right way, Mamie?" asked Helen.

"Goodness, yes. You're awful kind, Helen," said Mamie.

"Thus far, Mamie has nothing to complain of," continued Helen. "But she has read somewhere that the slaughter of the poor negroes in the Congo and of the Chinese in Manchuria, and of the Zulus in Natal, and of the Moros in the Philippines, arises from the necessity under which the civilised nations labour to find foreign markets for their increasing output of cotton goods, brass jewelry, and coloured beads. Now the members of Mamie's union are engaged in producing precisely those commodities, and they have come to feel in consequence, that they are directly responsible for the innocent blood that is being shed in various parts of the world. It cannot be their employers who are at fault, because the press and

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the clergy are unanimous in declaring that the heads of our great industries are the benefactors of humankind. That is why the girls protest. They are quite content with their own fate, but they cannot bear the entire responsibility for the march of civilisation. Mamie tells me that she cannot sleep of nights for thinking of the poor little Moorish babies whose mothers were killed by the French guns. That is the position taken by your union, isn't it, Mamie? "

Mamie giggled, went through a final contortion of ill-ease and returned to her place, in the half-circle. She was succeeded by a brown-haired little maiden, who for some minutes had been showing a strained anxiety to break into speech.

" Please, Helen," she entreated, " may I say something? "

" Of course, dear," said Helen.

The little maid bowed to the mayor. " Please,

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sir," she said, "my papa was thirty-eight years of age when he married mamma. He was an old bachelor. He was not anxious to be married, but they put a tax on him because they were afraid of depopulation. And he loves me very dearly. But sometimes when he thinks of his old freedom he looks so sadly at me. I feel very sorry for him then. I don't want him to be unhappy on my account——"

She withdrew and Helen stepped forward to sum up the case. "You must not think, your Honour, that it is our desire to embarrass your administration. Bad as conditions are, we would have continued to suffer in silence, because, you see, there are still little flashes of freedom left to us children. But we have learned that there is now on foot in England a movement which threatens to reduce us to unmitigated slavery. We understand that Mr. Sidney Webb, Mr. Francis Galton, Professor

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Karl Pearson, and Mr. Bernard Shaw are advocating a scheme of state endowment for motherhood. Now you can see for yourself what that would mean. In politics it would mean the establishment of a motherhood suffrage with plural voting based on the size of the family. In the economic sphere it would mean that we shall be supporting our papas and mammas. In art, which must reflect the actualities of life, it would mean almost the elimination of the element of love, since the world is to be a children's world. In other words, as I have already said, the entire social fabric will come to press on our shoulders alone. It is against the mere possibility of such an unnatural state of affairs that we are here to protest."

"But what is it you want?" asked the mayor, somewhat nettled because O'Brien, instead of backing him up, was busy piling three million

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golden dollars on the floor in stacks two and a half feet high.

“We want to be left alone!” The reply came in a chorus of trebles, pipings, quavers, and adolescent falsettos that caused the mayor to lift his hands to his forehead entreating silence. “We want our old privileges again. We want to be allowed just to grow up.”

“Yassir,” shrilled one voice above the others, “jist to grow up.”

The mayor raised himself in his chair and his eyes lit up with surprise at the sight of a well-known black little face at the very end of the second row.

“What, Topsy, you here?” he called out. “Haven’t you done growing all these sixty years, nearly?”

“Yassir,” answered Topsy, inserting an index finger into her mouth. “Ah was shure growin’ fas’; but Massa Booker Washin’ton

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he says that ah and the likes of me was charged with th' future of the negro race. An' that skyeered me so ah made up mah mind ah wouldn' grow no further."

The mayor turned to Helen. "You understand of course, my dear, that I cannot lay a proposition of so vague a nature before the Board of Aldermen. They are a rather unimaginative set of men."

"We have drawn up a list of demands, your Honour, in terms precise enough to make it a sufficient basis for practical legislation. May I read the list to you, papa?"

"Yes, my dear," he replied, and rising from his chair he put his arms about her and kissed her. Her forehead was cool to his burning lips. "Pray proceed, Miss Chairman."

And Helen read in her high-pitched, petulantly graceful soprano: "Resolutions adopted at a special meeting of the Central Bureau of

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the Federated Children's Organisations of the United States:

"1. Henceforth the proportion of child fiction in any magazine shall be restricted to ten per cent. of the total contents of such publication; and no magazine fiction child under the age of twelve shall be represented as possessing an amount of intelligence greater than the combined wisdom of its parents.

"2. The married heroine of a society drama who has consistently preferred yachting trips, bridge, and the opera to the company of her children shall be precluded from calling upon them for aid to save herself from the dangers of a mad infatuation.

"3. Children under the age of eighteen shall be employed in no form of industry whatsoever. If there are not enough hands to produce piece goods for the Congo and the Philippines, let them draft all adult motor-car chauffeurs, dia-

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mond polishers, wine agents, amateur coach drivers, settlement workers, preachers of the simple life, and writers of musical comedy.

“4. In the public schools there shall be no talks or lessons dealing with the duties of citizenship. The time now given to that subject shall be devoted to the reading of dime novels and fairy tales, so that on graduating, children shall not be confronted with so startling a contrast between the realities of life and what they have learned at school.

“5. Cooking and other branches of domestic science shall no longer be taught in the schools. One-half of us expect to live in family hotels and the other half will probably be in no position to afford the expensive ingredients employed in scientific cookery.

“6. Mr. Francis Galton, who invented Eugenics, and Messrs. Karl Pearson and Sidney Webb, who helped to popularise it, shall be ex-

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ecuted. Mr. Bernard Shaw shall be banished to a desert island."

And the mayor all the while kept thinking how like her mother Helen was: her voice, her hair, her eyes, but especially her voice. It filled the room with many-coloured vibrations of the consistency of building concrete and hid completely from the mayor's sight the crowd of young faces, O'Brien, the Board of Aldermen, and the three million presidents of the Board of Education. Only Helen remained and she came close to him and laid her cool fingers on his aching head.

The mayor started up to find his wife bending over him.

"Edward," she was saying, "you promised me you would go to bed early."

"My dear," he replied, "I would have if I had not fallen asleep in my chair. Have you had a pleasant evening at the theatre?"

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“It is dreadful weather,” she said, “and I have a bit of cold. I suppose I shouldn’t have gone out to-night, but it was the last chance, and you know the children *would* see ‘Peter Pan.’”

XVIII

THE MARTIANS

THE saddest thing about the recent announcement that there are no canals on Mars is that Robert and I will now have so little to talk about. Robert is my favourite waiter, and when he found out that I am what the newspapers call a literary worker, he made up his mind that the ordinary topics of light conversation would not do at all for me. After prolonged resistance on my part he has succeeded in reducing our common interests to two: the canals on Mars and French depopulation. Now and then I venture to bring up the weather or the higher cost of living. Once I asked him what he thought about the need of football reform. Once I tried to drag in Mme. Steinheil. But

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Robert listens patiently, and when I have concluded he calls my attention to the fact that in 1908 the number of deaths in France exceeded the number of births by 12,000. When the French population fails to stir me, he wonders whether the inhabitants of Mars are really as intelligent as they are supposed to be.

And yet it must have been I that first suggested Mars to him. Let me confess. I do not love the Martian canals with the devouring passion they have aroused in susceptible souls like Robert. But in a quieter way the canals have been very dear to me. Their threatened loss comes like the loss of an old friend; a distant friend whose face one has almost forgotten and never hopes to see again, from whom one never hopes to borrow, and to whom one never expects to lend, but who all the more lives in the mind a remote, impersonal, and gentle influence. I am not ashamed to admit that I

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have learned to care more for the Martian canals than for any canals much closer to us. The Panama Canal will probably cut in two the distance to China, and give us a monopoly of the cotton goods trade in the Pacific; but I think cotton goods are unhealthful, and I don't want to go to China. The Suez Canal may be the mainstay of the British Empire, but I have no doubt that it would make just as satisfactory a mainstay for some other empire. My interest in the Erie Canal is connected entirely with the fact that when it was opened somebody said, "What hath God wrought!" or "There is no more North and no more South"—I have forgotten which.

I have always had a softer spot in my heart for the inhabitants of Mars than for any other alien people. They have always impressed me as more unassuming than the English, fonder of outdoor exercise than the Germans, and less

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addicted to garrulity than the French. They lead simple, laborious lives, digging away at their canals every morning, and filling them up every night, for reasons best known to themselves and certain professors at Harvard. I am attracted by their quaint appearance. Mr. H. G. Wells, for instance, has depicted them with cylindrical bodies of sheet iron, long legs like a tripod, heads like an enormous diver's helmet, and arms like the tentacles of an octopus—as odd a sight in their way as the latest woman's fashions from Paris. Others have described the Martians as pot-bellied and hairless, with goggle eyes, powerful arms, and curly, gelatinous legs, the result of millions of years of universal culture and Subway congestion. A race so unattractive could not but be virtuous. One feels instinctively that there is no graft bound up with the digging of the Martian canals.

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No, anything but graft. One of the principal reasons why I am so fond of the canals on Mars is that they are the most cheaply built system of public works on record. A professor of astronomy in Italy or Arizona finds a few dim lines on the plate of his camera, and immediately Mars is equipped with a splendid network of artificial waterways. Am I wrong in thinking of the Martian canals as one of the greatest triumphs of the human mind? An African savage might find an elephant's skeleton and from that reconstruct the animal in life. Only science can reconstruct an elephant from a half-inch fragment of the bone of his hind leg. Only a scientist could have reconstructed the Martian canals from a few photographic scratches. Of such reconstructions our civilisation is largely made up. We build up a statesman out of a bit of buncombe and a frock coat; a genius out of two sonnets and

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half a dozen cocktails; a dramatic "star" out of a lisp and a giggle; a two-column news story out of the fragment of a fact; a multitude out of three men and a band; a crusade out of one man and a press agent; a novel out of the trimmings of earlier novels; a reputation out of an accident; a captain of industry out of an itching palm; a philanthropist out of a beneficent smile and a platitude; a critic out of a wise look and a fountain pen; and a social prophet out of pretty small potatoes. I need not allude here to the process of making mountains out of molehills, beams out of motes, and entire summers out of single swallows.

But mind, I do not mean that I was ever sceptical about the canals. Indeed, I have always admired the way in which their existence was demonstrated. There have always been two ways of proving that something is true. One way is to bring forward sixteen rea-

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sons why, let us say, the moon is made of green cheese. The other way is to assume that the moon is made of green cheese and to answer sixteen objections brought forward against the theory. I have always preferred the second method, because it throws the burden of proof on your opponent. There is no argument under the sun that cannot be refuted. Obviously, then, it is an advantage to let your opponents supply the argument while you supply the refutation.

Neglect this precaution, and you are in difficulties from the start. You contend, for instance, that the moon must be made of cheese because the moon and cheese are both round, as a rule. True, says your opponent, but so are doughnuts, women's arguments, and, occasionally, the wheels on a trolley car. The moon and cheese, you go on, both come after dinner. Yes, says your opponent, but so do unwelcome

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visitors, musical comedies, and indigestion. Then, you say, there is the cow who jumped over the moon. Would she have resorted to such extraordinary procedure if she had not perceived that the moon was made of cheese from her own milk? Well (says your opponent), the cow might merely have been trying to gain a broader outlook upon life. And here you are thirteen reasons from the end, and your hands hopelessly full.

Now compare the advantages of the other method. You adopt a resolute bearing and declare: "The moon is made of green cheese." It is now for your opponent to speak. He argues: "But that would make the moon's ingredients different from those of the earth and other celestial bodies." "Not at all," you say; "the earth is made up largely of chalk, and what is the difference between chalk and cheese, except in the price?" "But, if it's green

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cheese the moon is made of," asks your opponent, "why does it look yellow?" "Only the natural effect of atmospheric refraction," you reply calmly; "remember how a politician's badly soiled reputation will shine out a brilliant white, through the favourable atmosphere that surrounds a Congressional investigating committee. Recall how a lady who is green with envy at her neighbour's new hat will turn pink with delight when the two meet in the street and kiss. Recall how the same lady's complexion of roses and milk will assume its natural yellow under the candid dissection of her dearest friends." Your opponent might go on marshalling his objections forever, and you would have no difficulty in knocking them on the head.

So I used to believe. But if the method breaks down in the case of Mars and its canals, it breaks down everywhere else. If there

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are no canals on Mars, what about the blessings of the tariff, which are based on exactly the same kind of reasoning? What about the efficacy of mental healing? What about the advantages of giving up coffee? What about the impending invasion of California by the Japanese? What about the Kaiser's qualifications as an art critic? What about the restraining influence of publicity on corporations? What about the connection between easy divorce and the higher life? What about the divine right of railroad presidents? What about the theatrical manager's passion for a purified stage? What about the value of all anti-fat medicines? All of these things have been shown to be true by assuming that they are true. If the canals on Mars go, all these have to go. And that makes me almost as sad as the fact that I shall have nothing to talk about with my favourite waiter.

XIX

THE COMPLETE COLLECTOR—II

“THE idea of this exquisite little collection of frauds and forgeries,” said Cooper, “—and I don’t believe I am boasting when I speak of my few treasures as exquisite—came to me in a natural enough way. One of the bitterest trials the connoisseur has to contend with, is the consciousness that no amount of care and expense can guarantee him an absolutely flawless collection. The suspicion of the experts has fallen upon not a single picture, brass, marble or iron in his galleries; and yet as he walks those galleries the unhappy owner groans under the moral conviction that there are spurious pictures on his walls, spurious marbles in his halls, spurious carvings and coins under his glass

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cases, and that there they must stay until discovered and exposed.

“A perfect collection, therefore, in the sense of a collection in which every object can be traced back with absolute certainty to its author and its place of origin, is impossible. Unless, and that is how the inspiration came,” said Cooper, “unless one set to collecting objects of art which have been proved to be fraudulent. Then and only then, could one be sure that one’s treasures were just what one believed them to be. And that is just what I set out to do. I began buying objects of art, which, after masquerading under a great name, had been exposed and given up to scorn. I have kept at it for twenty years, and I can now point to what no American multi-millionaire can ever boast of, a collection made up *entirely* of “fakes.” When I stroll through *my* little museum I am obsessed by no doubts.

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I am as certain as I am of being alive that no genuine Leonardo or Holbein or Manet or Cellini has found its way under my roof.

“I must admit,” Cooper went on, “that the question of economy has been an important factor in the case. When we first set up house-keeping, a year after our marriage, our means were not unlimited and our tastes were of the very highest. Buying the best work or even the second-best work of the best painters was out of the question. But buying cheap copies of the masters, replicas, casts, photogravures, was equally impossible. The idea of owning anything that some one else may own at the same time is abhorrent to the true collector. On the other hand, if we went in for spurious masterpieces, we were sure of securing unique specimens at very small expense. And I will not deny that the bargain element appealed very strongly to Mrs. Cooper. Most of

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our things we got at really fabulous reductions. There was the crown of an Assyrian princess of the twenty-fourth century B.C., for which one of the leading European museums paid \$75,000, and which, after it was shown that it had been made by a Copenhagen jeweller in 1907, I purchased from the museum for something like fifty-five dollars, plus the freight. This charming little landscape with sheep and a shepherd boy brought \$23,000 in a Fifth Avenue auction room two years ago. Three months after it was sold, a certain Mrs. Smith on Staten Island sued her husband for desertion and non-support, and in the course of the proceedings it was brought out that Smith made \$10,000 a year painting Corots and Daubignys, and that the \$23,000 picture was one of his latest achievements. I got it for a little over one hundred dollars. I am really proud of the picture, because Smith has put into it enough

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of the Corot quality to deceive many an expert observer. If I were not in possession of the documentary proof that Smith painted the picture in 1908, I should myself be tempted at times to believe that Smith and his wife lied in court and that the picture is really a Corot.

“But these are the chances,” said Cooper, “that every art-lover must take. I have said that at present I feel perfectly sure that not a single genuine work has crept in to vitiate my collection. And that is true. But only a few weeks ago I had a very bad quarter of an hour indeed over this spurious Tanagra figurine. It had been bought for a museum not one hundred miles from here by a patron who was a good friend of mine, and who had paid several thousand dollars for the statuette. I was in the room with Hawley when Stimson, our very greatest Greek archæologist and art-

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expert, entered, and, catching sight of the little figure, picked it up, studied it for a few moments, smelt it, licked it with his tongue, pressed it to his cheek, and handed it back to my friend with a single, blasting comment—‘fake.’ We two were incredulous, but within fifteen minutes Stimson had convinced us that the thing was a palpable fraud. Quite beside himself with vexation, Hawley lifted up the statuette and was about to dash it into fragments on the ground, when I caught his arm. ‘Let me have it,’ I said; and I carried it home in great glee.

“Well, a few weeks later I was showing my collection to Dr. Friedheimer of Berlin, who is a much greater man even than Stimson. The German savant stopped in fascination before the Tanagra figurine. ‘A pretty good imitation,’ I said. He seized the statuette with trembling fingers. ‘Imitation!’ he shouted. ‘Chen-

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uine, chenuine as de hairs on your het. Himmel, wat a find!’ And he proceeded to do what Stimson had done, and he smelt it and licked it, and rubbed it against his beard, and I am not sure but that he knocked it against his forehead to test its texture. And then in his agitation he let the figure fall, and it broke in two on the floor, and inside we found a bit of newspaper dated Naples, January 27, 1903. Dr. Friedheimer could only say, ‘Unerhört!’ but I was nearly frantic with delight. I repaired the statuette, and it now holds, as you see, the place of honour in my collection.”

As we sat over our coffee and cigars, Cooper grew reflective. “After all,” he said, “is not the fabricator of frauds fully as great an artist as the man whose work he imitates? Take the famous marble Aphrodite of a few years ago, which was attributed by some critics to Praxiteles, and by some critics to Scopas, until

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proof came that it had been made in Hoboken. Consider the labour that went into the fraud. For years, probably, the dishonest sculptor was engaged in preliminary studies for the work. He spent months in libraries, museums, and the lecture-rooms of learned professors. He impregnated himself with the spirit of Greek art. He devoted months to searching for a suitable piece of antique marble. How long he was in carving it, I can only guess. When it was completed, he boiled it in oil; then he boiled it in milk; then he boiled it in soap; then he boiled it in a concoction of molasses and wine; then he buried it in moist soil, and let it age for three years.

“Now, suppose the statue had been really carved by Praxiteles. That joyous master and genius might have put two weeks’ work, three weeks’ work, a month’s work, upon it, and there you were. What was the labour of a lifetime to

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the other man was to Praxiteles just an easy bit of routine. If art is a man's soul and hopes and brain and sweat and blood put into concrete form, who produced the truer work of art, Praxiteles or the unknown sculptor of Hoboken? I speak only of the comparative expenditure of effort. So far as the artistic result is concerned, it is evident, from the ease with which we were taken in, that there is no great difference between the school of Hoboken and the school of Praxiteles."

XX

WHEN A FRIEND MARRIES

TAKING dinner with an old friend who has just been married is an experience I regard with apprehension. In the first place, it is always awkward to be introduced to a woman who begins by being jealous of you because you knew her husband long before she did. She may be a nice woman; in fact, from the air of almost imbecile happiness that invests young Hobson, you are sure she is. But since it is natural to hate those whom we have injured, it is natural for young wives to dislike their husband's friends.

People say that a woman begins to prepare for marriage at the age of five. Judging from the absolutely spontaneous way in which the

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Hobsons have taken to it, marriage is a career that calls for no preparation whatever. I am not referring, of course, to the outward aspects of early housekeeping. The little difficulties that beset the newly married are there. I can see that my hostess is more anxious about the creamed potatoes than she will be five years hence. Her attitude to the maid who waits on us is by turns excessively severe and excessively timid. I learn that the dining-room table has been sent back twice to the store, and is still not the one originally ordered. But these are trifles. It is with the Hobsons' souls I am concerned; and their souls are perfectly at ease in their new estate.

The first few minutes, like all introductions, go stiffly. The bride smiles and says that Jack has often spoken to her about you. Whereupon you remember that there are not many secrets a young husband keeps from his wife.

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Jack is no sieve, but he would be more than human if he has failed to dissect your little weaknesses and humours for his new wife. He has probably emphasized the two or three particular little failings of character which have prevented you from realising the brilliant promise you showed at college. At bottom, Jack thinks, you have the capacity for being almost as happy as he, Jack, is. But then, again, if Mrs. Hobson does know you thoroughly well, it strikes you that there is that much trouble saved, and you sit down to chat with a fair sense of intimacy.

Toward such conversation you and the man of the house are the principal contributors. You speak of college days and contemporary politics, and other things that the wife is not interested in, but she smiles graciously, and now and then takes sides with you against her husband. At one point in the conversation you

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look up and find her quietly scrutinising you. And you recall what you have heard concerning the match-making propensities of young wives, and you wonder uneasily if to herself she is running over a list of girl friends and trying to decide which one will suit you best. You even suspect that she inclined toward a Marjorie or an Edith, who is plain, but clever, a good manager, and of an affectionate disposition. Happily, at that moment the bride thanks you for your handsome wedding gift.

At table the visitor begins to be more at ease. For one thing, there is the traditional hazing process to which the bride must be subjected. Jack takes the lead. Admitting that to-night's repast is an unqualified success, he hints that there have been occasions when, if he only would, there might be a different tale to tell. The visitor protests; yet in the extravagant praise he resorts to there is a suggestion of mild banter

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which is considered the proper thing. The wife professes to enter into the joke; but in her heart she laughs to see the two men go solemnly through the stupid and outworn ceremonial. Young wives nowadays are excellent cooks. This one has secretly pursued a three months' course in domestic science and has a diploma hidden away somewhere. But she pretends to be properly outraged by our foolish satire, and insists on both being helped a second time to the custard. Jack, in fact, eats all that remains. It makes dish-washing easier, he says.

And as the visitor steers his way pleasantly through the meal, he makes the acquaintance of an extraordinary number of relatives. The spoons, he finds, are from Aunt Amy. Aunt Amy lives in Syracuse and at first objected to the match. The salt cellar is from a male cousin who (you learn this from Jack), it was thought at one time, would be the fortunate

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man himself—that is, until Jack appeared on the scene. Poor fellow, he sought consolation by marrying, only two months later, a nice girl from Alexandria, Va. The cut-glass salad dish is from the bride's dearest friend at boarding-school, a charming girl, who paints and sings and is now studying music in Berlin.

When the coffee is brought in, Jack asks if you will smoke. This is, in a way, the most dangerous situation of the entire evening. If you say yes, Jack is apt to pass the cigars and and say, "Go right ahead. I have given it up, you know, and I feel all the better for it." But if you are expert in reading faces, and decide that the bride probably has conscientious scruples against the habit, and you reply "No," Jack is likely to say, "Sorry, but Alice allows *me* one cigar a day after dinner," and you are left to suffer the torments of the lost, and have lied into the bargain. Nor is it pos-

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sible to lay down any rule for arriving at the correct reply under such circumstances. A hurried glance about the house will not help one. A handsome bronze ash-tray may be only a paperweight. Young wives are in the habit of buying their husbands the most ornate smoking apparatus, with the understanding that it shall never be used.

It is after dinner that reflection comes; and with it comes a touch of sorrowful wonder. Jack bears himself with great equanimity in his new condition; but it is apparent, nevertheless, that he has changed from what you knew him. In the first place, he has built up a comprehensive system of domestic serfdom to which he cheerfully submits. He glories in his enslavement; he rattles his chains. He actually boasts of the habit he has acquired of dropping in at the grocer's every morning on his way to the office. When it is the maid's day out, Jack in-

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sists on helping with the dishes and he tells you with pride that, given plenty of hot water, there is nothing in that line which he would hesitate to undertake. He makes it a point to visit Washington Market at least twice a week, and he comes home with cuts, joints, steaks, rounds, poultry, fish, game, and fruits in dazzling variety. He carries these things conspicuously in the Subway. And Jack's wife is appreciative of his kind intentions, and lets him bring, from long distances, meats which she can purchase at several cents a pound less from her butcher two blocks away.

The passion for acquiring food commodities is only one phase of Jack's new character. You begin to see now that all these years you have never suspected what capacities for home-building he had in him. In the presence of any kind of article offered for sale his overmastering passion is to buy the thing and take it home.

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Instinct apparently impels him to store up quite useless supplies against a future emergency. He haunts hardware stores, he rummages in antique furniture shops, and you may see him any day during the lunch hour flattening his nose against windowfuls of copper and brass ware. He buys patent hammers by the quarter dozen, as well as nails, tacks, screws, bolts, casters, brackets, and curtain poles. He brings home Japanese vases from the auction rooms. One day he acquired a step-ladder; it came by wagon because they refused to let him take it into the Subway.

And Jack's wife acquiesces in his self-imposed servitude. She does not demand it; she is even a good deal incommoded by it. But her woman's instinct tells her that the thing is a disease, which a man must catch, like the measles. Until the husband's passion for home-building quiets down, she is content to accept

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the unnatural situation; she is even proud to have inspired it.

But as Jack prattles on, and Jack's wife smiles over her embroidery frame, it comes over you that, despite all the kindly communion of the evening, you are an outsider there. You ask yourself bitterly whether there is such a thing as constancy in man, whether there is such a thing as true comradeship or affection. For fifteen years, from your freshman year at high school, you and Jack have been what the world calls friends. What are you now? Jack still calls you friend; apparently that is the reason why you have just dined with him and his wife. But in reality you are not there as his friend. You are there as the guest of this newly-constituted social unit, this new family. You are there not as a person, but as part of an institution.

And just when you are ready to accept the

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new situation you are swept away by the unreality of the entire arrangement. It is inconceivable that Jack should have thrown you over for this alien person whom he calls wife. Your habits and Jack's are so much alike; your tastes, your outlook upon life. You used to play the same games at college, sing the same songs, smoke the same tobacco, wear each other's clothes, and now Jack has thrown you over for one with whom in the nature of things he can have none of those habits in common. It is not merely puzzling; it grows almost absurd. You shake your head over it some time after you have said good-night, and the bride has told you that as a dear friend of Jack's, they always will be pleased to have you call.

XXI

THE PERFECT UNION OF THE ARTS

I HAVE never had the slightest reason to doubt Harding's truthfulness. The following episode, I remember, was told with more than Harding's usual gravity. I can do nothing better than to give it here in Harding's own words so far as I can recall them:

On the third day after his arrival, my guest, Muhammad Abu Nozeyr, said to me, "O Harding Effendi, I desire greatly to witness a presentation of what you and the wife of your bosom, on whom both be peace, have often referred to as Grand Opera."

I replied, with involuntary astonishment. "Son of a hundred sheiks, forgive my seemingly derelict hospitality. But I should have asked

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you before this to go to the opera with us, if I had not thought that the principles of your faith were opposed thereto. For you must know, O Father of the Defenceless, that our women go there unveiled even as the women of the people that you see on our streets, and that on the stage, singers of both sexes indulge in open exaltation of that thing called love, which your prophet has confined within the walls of the *haremlik*."

Abu Nozeyr laughed. "Your knowledge of our customs, Harding Effendi, is fifty years behind the times. True, I come from the desert, and have never heard your singing women of the stage. But did not one of the learned muftis at yesterday's evening repast declare that 'Aïda' was written for the Khedewi Ismail Pasha, may his soul rest in peace?"

"Yes," I said; "but you will understand, Dispenser of a Thousand Mercies, why at first

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blush Islam and the lyric stage should strike me as somewhat incompatible.”

“Not modern Islam,” he replied. “Take us not too literally. I am told that your people, like others of the Feringhi, have succeeded in building battleships which are really instruments of peace; that you have trust companies in which you place no confidence, and Open Doors which you close against people from my part of the world; you have legislators who speak but do not legislate, and a Speaker who legislates but does not speak; you have had men in your White House who always saw red, and you have red-emblazoned newspapers which are yellow; you call your politicians public servants who are your masters, and you call your women the masters, but will not let them vote. Why, then, should you be so surprised at any seeming incongruity in others?”

“I am convinced, Abu Nozeyr,” I said, “and

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to-morrow we will go to see 'Tristan und Isolde.' But shall I attempt to describe for you, in a few words, just what Grand Opera is? "

" My ear is open to your words, Harding Ef-fendi."

" Know, then, Protector of the Fatherless, that the music-drama is a perfect blending of all the arts. It calls to its aid the resources of sculpture, painting, dancing, together with numerous mechanical agencies, and to a minor extent, music and the drama. For observe, O Abu Nozeyr, that each art aims to awake its own specific emotion. Sculpture appeals to our sense of form, painting to our delight in colour, dancing to the pleasure of rhythmic motion, the mechanic arts to our liking for sudden action, while music and the uttered word represent the union of the clearest and vaguest modes of expressing thought. It follows therefore

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that the highest phase of human emotion can only be expressed by that art which gives us simultaneously the living form of a Venus de Milo with the colouring of a Titian, the grace of a Nautch girl, the miracle-working powers of a Hindu fakir, the elocution of a Demosthenes, and the voice of a Malibran."

"By the beard of the Prophet," exclaimed Abu Nozeyr, "I thought such bliss was to be had only in the Paradise of the Faithful; and that is Grand Opera, Harding Effendi?"

"With certain modifications," I replied. "Nothing human is perfect, Abu Nozeyr. It is a regrettable circumstance that the human voice attains its perfect development many years after the human form. Hence our heroes on the lyric stage are all middle-aged and our heroines somewhat heavy in movement. I have seen a pair of starving lovers in an operatic garret, who would surely not have passed the

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scrutiny of a United Charities investigator. It is also to be regretted that adequate voice-production leaves no breath for dancing or other forms of active effort. Hence the dance with which Carmen fascinates poor Don José, argues an intense readiness to be pleased on the part of the latter, and Telramund's defeat at the hands of Lohengrin is never quite free from a certain degree of contributory negligence."

"But tell me this, Harding Effendi, are there composers who have carried the union of the arts to a higher point than others?"

"There are, O Grandson of the Wild Ass. There are operas in which at certain moments the libretto speaks of a leaping fire, the music plays leaping fire, and the fire actually leaps and blazes on the stage. But unfortunately it always happens that the words cannot be heard because of the orchestra, and the fire sinks when the orchestral swell rises, and rises when

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the orchestral surge subsides. I have caught the orchestral sound of hammer on anvil long before the two have come into contact, and have heard Spring described as entering through a door which persists in staying closed. I have seen boats being pushed by human hands, Rhine maidens suspended on a wire, and harvest moons moving in orbits unknown to Herschel and Pickering."

"And are there people who still persist in taking their sculpture, painting, drama, and music separately, Harding Effendi?"

"There are; but that is because they fail to recognise that opera is a perfect union of all the arts. To-morrow, Abu Nozeyr, we go to hear 'Tristan und Isolde.' It appeals to every one of our senses. To enjoy it completely, however, it is often wise to close one's eyes and just hear the singer sing."

XXII

AN EMINENT AMERICAN

AFTER dinner I asked Herr Grundschnitt what headway he was making in his studies of American life. The professor was in more than his usually mellow mood. He had enjoyed his dinner. He liked his cigar. He confided to me that he was hard at work on a volume of sketches dealing with the career of representative successful Americans, and he offered to read me one of his early chapters. If the following summary of Herr Grundschnitt's account of the life of Wallabout Smith can even suggest the extraordinary impression which the original produced upon me, I am content.

Wallabout Smith did not attain recognition until late in life. I gather that he must have

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been well over fifty when a former President of the United States declared that Wallabout Smith, by raising a family of four sons and two daughters, had done more for his country than all the laws enacted by the Legislatures of all the New England and Middle Atlantic States since the Spanish-American War. Fame came rapidly after this. The college professors repeated what the former President said. The newspapers repeated what the college professors said. The playwrights repeated what the newspapers said. The pulpit repeated what the playwrights said. Interviewers descended upon Wallabout Smith. They wore out his front lawn, the hall carpet, and the maid-servant's temper; but they always found Smith himself patient, affable, ready to say whatever they wished him to say.

The reporters would usually begin by asking Wallabout Smith what were his lighter inter-

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ests in life. "I find my greatest pleasure," Smith would reply, "in common things. For instance, I have never ceased to be intensely interested in the cost of shoes and stockings. The subject is fascinating and inexhaustible. One gets tired of most things, but there has never been a time in which the cost of shoes and stockings has failed to appeal with peculiar force to me. My odd moments on the train have as a rule been taken up with that question. If you have ever thought upon this subject, you must have been struck with the fact that, putting food aside, shoes and stockings constitute the most permanent and persistent human need. They begin with the first few weeks of our life, and they continue to the end; the size alone changes. It is a subject, too, that opens up such wide horizons. For while a man of comparatively little leisure can confine himself to the simple topic of shoes and

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stockings, he may, if he so desires, widen the field of his interests so as to include the allied subjects of frocks, jackets, blouses, caps, and collars, until he has covered the entire range of children's apparel. Nor is that all. I have spent many an absorbing hour figuring out the annual rate of increase in servants' wages and rent. Of late years I have been in the habit of putting in part of my lunch hour in a study of college fees and tailors' bills. In moments of extreme physical lassitude, when nothing else appeals to me, I think about the next quarterly premium on my insurance policy."

How well-known men do their work has always interested the public. Few newspaper men omitted to question Wallabout Smith on this subject. From the large number of interviews cited by Herr Grundschnitt we may build up a very fair picture of Wallabout Smith's daily routine. It was his habit to spend a good

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part of his day in New York City. He would rise about six o'clock every week-day in the year, and, snatching a hasty breakfast, would make his way to the railroad station, pausing now and then in perplexity as he tried to recall what it was his wife had asked him to bring home from town. Sometimes he would catch his train and sometimes he would not. Arrived at his office, he would remove his coat, and, putting on a black alpaca jacket to which he was greatly attached, he would proceed to glance over, check, and transcribe the contents of a large number of bills and vouchers representing the daily transactions of a very prosperous commercial enterprise in which he had no proprietary interest. The day's work would be pleasantly broken up by frequent inquiries from the general manager's office. Every now and then a fellow-worker would take a moment from his duties to ask Wallabout Smith how

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his lawn was getting on. Sometimes he would be summoned to the telephone, only to learn that Central had called the wrong number. Lunch was a matter of a few minutes. At 5.30 every afternoon Wallabout Smith exchanged his alpaca jacket for his street coat with a fine sense of weariness, and the secure conviction that the next morning would find the same task waiting for him on his table. "I have no hesitation in stating," Smith would frequently say, "that some of the busiest hours of my life have been spent at my office desk."

Walking was his favourite form of exercise. When he lived in the city during the first few years after his marriage, he used to walk the floor with the baby. Later when the children began to grow up and he moved out into the country, he walked to and from the station. His gait was a free, manly stride, bordering close upon a run, in the morning, and a more

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deliberate, sliding pace, somewhat suggestive of a shuffle, in the evening. He was at his best when tramping the country roads with a congenial companion or two on a Sunday afternoon. On such occasions he would pour forth a continuous stream of light-hearted talk on everything under the sun—the new board of village trustees, the shameful condition of the village streets, the prospects of a new roof for the railway station. Good-nature was the keynote of his character, but he would frequently sum up a situation or a person with a sly touch of irony or a trenchant word or two. He once described the village streets as being paved chiefly with good intentions. Another time he characterised the minister of a rival church as having the courage of his wife's convictions. But such flashes of satire went and left no rancour behind them. His high spirits were proof against everything but automobiles.

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These he detested, not because they made walking unpleasant and even dangerous, but because they were run by men who mortgaged their homes to buy motor cars, and thus threatened the stability of business conditions.

Wallabout Smith would often be asked to lay down a few rules for those who wished to emulate his success. He would invariably reply that the secret of bringing up children was the same double secret that underlay success in every other field—enthusiasm and patience. “It has always been my belief,” he would say, “that the head of a family should spend at least as much time with his children as he does at his barber’s or his lodge, and, if possible, a little more. Children undoubtedly stand in need of supervision. In the beginning, it is a question largely of keeping them away from the matches and the laudanum. Fortunately, we live at some distance from a trolley-line and

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there is no well in our back-yard. As my children grew up, I made it a point to know what books they were reading out of school and whether the boys were addicted to the filthy cigarette habit. On the subjects of breakfast foods and corporal punishment, I have always kept an open mind."

The experiment of living upon a basis of comradeship with one's children which we see so frequently recommended was not a success in the case of Wallabout Smith. "Although my boys are fond of me," he once told a reporter, "they usually regard my presence as a bore. When I find time to go out walking with them, they do their best to lose me, and whenever we divide off into teams for a game of ball, each side insists on my going with the other side. I have made up my mind that there is a time for being with one's children and a time for letting them alone, and that the proper

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time for being with them is when they are in trouble and want you, and the proper time for letting them alone is when they are happy and wish to be let alone. This I admit is the reverse of the common practice, and probably there is something to be said for parents who grow fond of their children's society when they, the parents, have nothing else to do. As a rule, I have never obtruded myself on my boys, being confident that natural affection and the recurrent need of pocket-money would constitute a sufficient bond between us."

There was, in conclusion, one factor in his success upon which Wallabout Smith would never fail to lay the most emphatic stress, and to which Herr Grundschnitt attached equal importance. "Such fame," he would say, "as has fallen to my share must be attributed in the very largest measure to my wife. Many is the time she gave up her meetings at the

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Browning Club to watch with me beside the sick-bed of one of our little ones. And she would do this so uncomplainingly, so cheerfully, that it almost made one oblivious to the extent of her sacrifice. There must have been occasions, I feel sure, when it cost her a pang to find her photograph omitted from the local paper's account of a club meeting or a church bazaar; but if she ever suffered on that score, she never let it be known. I can truly say that, without her, my life work would have spelt failure."

XXIII

BEHIND THE TIMES

I HAD scarcely exchanged a half-dozen sentences with Howard King before we knew ourselves for kindred spirits. I was in a roomful of people who were talking about new books I had not read, new plays I had not seen, and new singers I had not heard, and I was exceedingly lonesome. There was one youngish middle-aged lady in pink, who asked me what was the best novel I had read of late, and when I said "Robert Elsmere," she looked at me rather grimly and asked whether I lived in New York. When I said yes, she turned away and began chatting with a young man on her right, who looked like the advertisement for a new linen collar. It was this reply of mine that

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attracted Howard King's attention. He had been sitting in one corner of the room quite as disconsolate as I was. But now he walked over and shook hands and told me that in his opinion "Robert Elsmere" was not so good a book as "Trilby," which he was just reading.

Howard King and I belong to the comparatively small class of men whom nature, or fate, or whatever you please, has decreed to be always a certain interval behind the times; it might be years or months or days, according to the rate of speed at which a particular fashion happened to be moving forward. King told me, for instance, that of late he has been possessed with a passionate desire to learn the game of ping-pong. When all the world was playing table-tennis eight or ten years ago, King viewed the game with disgust. He thought it utterly childish, uninteresting, and admirably illustrative of all the idiotic quali-

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ties that go to make up a fad. But for the last six months, King said, he frequently wakes at night and sits up in bed and yearns with all his soul for a ping-pong set. He was, of course, ashamed to speak to others about it. But if he could find some one who shared his feelings on the subject, he had a large library with a square table in it. Would I come tomorrow night? I said I should be very glad, indeed.

I told Howard King what my attitude is toward clothes. It is my fate always to grow fond of a fashion just as it is passing out. I recalled the exaggerated military styles for men that came in with the Spanish-American and the South African wars. Those enormously padded shoulders and tight-shaped waists and swelling trouser legs, and the strut and the stoop that went with the whole ugly *ensemble*, roused my anger. My feelings remained un-

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changed until some time after the Russo-Japanese War, and then one day it came to me that I must have a suit of military cut. It was like the sudden awakening of the unregenerate to grace, it was as irresistible as first love. And when the tailor said that only sloping shoulders were now being worn, that what I wanted was hopelessly out of date, the sense of loss was overpowering. I confessed to King that in my opinion nothing uglier in men's apparel was conceivable than the green plush hats that are just beginning to go out of style. And I told him that I was as certain as I am certain of anything in this world that some day in the very near future I shall be seized with an uncontrollable longing to wear a green plush hat, and I shall enter a shop and ask for one, and the man behind the counter will look at me quizzically, and, after a long search, bring me the only plush hat in his shop, and I shall carry

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it home in shame, and put it away in my closet, and mourn over the resolution that came too late.

You must not imagine that Howard King and I are conservatives. We do not hold fast to one thing, or even hold fast to the old. We move forward, but at a pace so curiously regulated as to bring us to the front door just when most people are leaving by the back. I have worn every shape of linen collar that the best-dressed men have worn during the last fifteen years; but I have worn them from three to six months late. I became passionately fond of bicycling shortly after all the bicycle factories began the exclusive production of automobiles. I am not very fond of automobiles, but I shall be, I know, when aëroplanes come into extensive use. It is only in the last few months that I have discovered how amusing a toy the Teddy bear makes. And this is true of fashions in games and of fashions in language.

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I have no fundamental objections to slang, but I always pick up the bit of slang that most people are just discarding.

I recall, for instance, how, up in the hills last summer, the woods and glens were echoing to the sound, half a howl and half a screech, of "Oh, you!" addressed at quarter-minute intervals to every object, animate or inanimate, that came within the howler's vision or thought. This particular bit of gutter-slang induced a peculiar irritation. It seemed to me utter desecration that this quickening beauty of hill and sky and river and green woods, which should have stirred young hearts to madrigals and chorals, should resound to the blatant, shrieking vulgarity of Lobster Square. I do not mind confessing that at times my feelings towards the innocent young barbarians bordered close on murder. Until—until, alas! one September morning, after all the guests were gone

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and I alone remained; that morning I woke with the poison in my soul, and I walked down to the river for my bath, and, coming across the farmer's herd of cows halfway down the hillside, saluted them, before I knew what I was doing, with that horrid, that unspeakable—I blush now to think of it. When I told Howard King, he admitted humbly that after holding out for years he has just begun to say, "It's me," and that he feels morally convinced that within the next year or two he will be saying "Between you and I."

But you must not think that this peculiarity in Howard King and myself is an acquired habit or a pose in which we take any measure of pride. Our attitude towards those happy people who are always in fashion is one of sincere and profound envy. I think there is nothing more wonderful under the sun than the unknown force that impels the great majority to

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begin doing the same new thing at the same time. It must be a precious gift to feel instinctively what the right new thing is to do. A mysterious fiat goes forth and a million women simultaneously put on black straw hats surmounted by a cock in his pride. Another mysterious order goes forth and two million women simultaneously begin reading the latest novel by Robert W. Chambers. Pitiable are those in whom this instinct is wanting and who must tag timidly behind, venturing only where a million others have gone before. Perhaps it is, with such people, a case of arrested development. Boys of sixteen and girls of fourteen have supplied the poets with their greatest love stories and direst tragedies. And there are men and women well gone into middle age who balk and stammer in the presence of the most elementary sensation. Perhaps at bottom it is simply a question of courage and cowardice.

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In any case, being behind the times is a peculiarly unfortunate trait in a man, who, like myself, is condemned to earn his bread in the sweat of his fountain-pen. In what other profession must a man be so emphatically up to the minute as in this scribbling profession of ours? Only yesterday I walked into an editor's office and suggested a three-thousand word review of "The Rise of Silas Lapham," which I told him was one of the greatest novels in any language. He stared at me and asked if I hadn't some fresher book in mind, and I, somewhat taken aback, told him that I was just finishing Frank Norris's "McTeague" and was about to begin on Mrs. Wharton's "House of Mirth." With a brutality characteristic of editors he asked me whether I didn't care to write a review of Homer's Iliad and the book of Deuteronomy. I told him that I might very well do so if it were a question of writing something

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he would find personally instructive, and rose to go, with the intention of slamming the door behind me.

But he called me back and insisted that he meant no offence, that he simply must have live, up-to-date copy or nothing at all. He proposed a popular article on art, and wondered if I could write something about the Dutch masters, with special reference to the recent notable exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum. I was obliged to confess that I had missed the exhibition by two weeks. "Well," he said, patiently, "there is opera. You might do something about the singers. You have heard Mary Garden, of course?" I told him no. Only the other day I had irrevocably decided to hear Mary Garden in "Thaïs" next season; and the next morning I learned that Mr. Hammerstein had gone out of business.

He continued to be patient with me.

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“There’s ‘Chantecler,’ to be sure, although that is ancient history by this time. Have you read the play?” I had not, but just here an inspiration came. “You sneered at Homer just now,” I said. “Well, there was another Greek who wrote a bird play 2,300 years before Rostand. I mean Aristophanes——” The editor leaped from his chair. “Great, great!” he cried. “We’ll call it ‘Chantecler 400 B.C.’” I caught the infection of his enthusiasm. “And Aristophanes had another play on woman’s rights,” I told him. “You might call it ‘An Athenian Suffragette.’” “Splendid!” he cried; “splendid; we can make a whole series, and Goulden will do the pictures in colours. It’s the most novel thing I have heard of for a long time. It will beat the others by a mile.” And he sent me away happy.

XXIV

PUBLIC LIARS

THERE are three things that puzzle me; yes, four things that I cannot explain: Why street clocks never show the right time; why thermometers hanging outside of drug stores never indicate the right temperature; why slot machines on a railway platform never give the right weight; and why weather-vanes always point in the wrong direction. At bottom, I imagine, these are really not four things, but one. For it must be the same mysterious and malicious principle that takes each of these contrivances, set up to be a public guide to truth, and turns it into an instrument for the dissemination of error.

What makes me think that there is some ani-

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mate principle behind such clocks is that they are so like a good many people one meets. There are persons who are packed with the most curiously inaccurate information on the most abstruse subjects, and they insist on imparting it to you. I have no ground to complain if I ask Jones what is the capital of Illinois and he says Chicago. The initiative was mine, and taken at my own peril, and it is fair that I should pay the penalty. But frequently Jones will break in upon me in the middle of a column of figures and tell me that the largest ranch in the world is situated in the State of Sonora, Mexico. "Yes?" I say, hoping that he will go away. "Yes," he assures me. "It is so large that the proprietor can ride 200 days on horseback without leaving his own grounds. He has 2,000,000 men working for him and he lives in a marble palace of 700 rooms. No one can be elected President of Mexico against his will."

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Now obviously it would have been better for me to remain altogether unacquainted with Mexican conditions than to share Jones's distorted view of affairs in that interesting republic. But Jones insists on taking the innocent blank spaces in my knowledge of the world and filling them up with the most incorrect data. He tells me, for instance, that Mme. Finisterra once sang the mad scene from "Lucia" before the late Sultan of Morocco, who wept so bitterly that the performance was interrupted lest the monarch should go into convulsions. At the age of eight Mme. Finisterra knew twelve operatic soprano rôles by heart, and when she was ten she played Juliet to Tamagno's Romeo. She now gets \$10,000 a night, in addition to the service of a maid, a chef, and two private secretaries. In private life she is very stout. All this, needless to say, is not true.

But I must not forget the clocks. The

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worst of the class, oddly enough, are those found in front of watchmakers' and opticians' shops. I sometimes think that such clocks are purposely put out of order by the shop-keeper. The object is apparently to induce irascible old gentlemen to enter the store, watch in hand, in order to protest against the maintenance of a public nuisance. It is then a comparatively easy task to sell them a pair of solid gold spectacles with double lenses at a handsome profit. I, for one, would not blame the old gentleman who should pick up a stone and hurl it at one of these Tartuffes and Chadbands of the street-corner with their chubby, gilded hands reposing on their prosperous stomachs, sleek and smug and ultra-respectable, but unconscionable liars for all that. They are not content with their own success in cheating, they throw discredit upon honest folk. How many a faithful pocket-piece has been pulled out by its disap-

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pointed owner and actually set wrong to make it agree with one of these rubicund old sinners? Such is the overpowering effect of impudent assurance on the ordinary man.

The difference between the typical public clock and a watch out of order is obvious. Every prudent man knows the peculiarities of his own watch, just as he knows the peculiarities of his own wife and children; and he is consequently prepared to make allowances. But the clock on the street corner persists in thrusting false information upon you. The man who consults his watch does so with a purpose, and is naturally on the alert. But the cheating clock confronts him in moments of unsuspecting security, and throws him into a condition of the wildest alarm. It is peculiarly active on bright spring days, when people rise early and look forward to being at their desks half an hour before their usual time. On such occasions they

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invariably come upon a clock which points to a quarter of ten, and sends them scurrying breathless up four flights of stairs, to find the janitor engaged in cleaning out the baskets.

Church clocks are not so bad as jewellers' clocks; but they are bad enough, and, in the nature of things, we have a right to expect more from a church clock than from any other kind. For the same reason the weathercock on a church steeple is to be judged by a higher standard than the one over a carpenter's shop or the ordinary dwelling. I cannot, for instance, imagine a more dangerous moral *ensemble* than a church with a clergyman preaching bad doctrine in the pulpit, a clock indicating the wrong time on the tower, and, over all, a clogged weather vane pointing to the south when the wind blows from the east.

With reference to denominations I have observed that Presbyterian clocks are apt to be

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more reliable than any other kind, although the truest clock I have ever come across is on a little Dutch Reformed Church in Orange County. One of the most unprincipled clocks I can think of is just outside my window. I use unprincipled with intention, for this clock is not vicious, but giddy. If it were consistently late or consistently early, one might get used to it. But to look out of the window at 9:30 and find this clock pointing to eleven, and to look out ten minutes later and find it pointing to 9:35, is extremely disconcerting. One is inclined to expect something more restrained in a clock connected with the most prosperous parish of one of our most conservative denominations.

What I have said of clocks is largely true of the weighing-machine. Like the public clock, it thrusts itself upon us, and like the clock it betrays the confidence which it invites. I feel convinced that no one would ever think of using

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a weighing-machine if it did not constitute the most characteristically national piece of furniture in our railway stations. All weighing-machines cheat, but, if cheat they must, give me the machine that flatly refuses to budge from zero after it has swallowed your coin. I prefer that kind to the spasmodic machine on which the indicator moves forward one hundred pounds every two minutes and leaves a person utterly uncertain as to whether he should immediately begin dieting or purchase a bottle of codliver oil. Yet even this mockery of a weighing-machine is preferable to the emotional type of scales which simultaneously gives you a false weight, tells your fortune in utter disregard of age and sex, and plays a tune that cannot be recognised. When such a machine has registered a German matron's weight at 115 pounds and informed her that she will some day be President of the United States, it is ludicrous to

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have it break into a tinkle of self-appreciation, like a spaniel barking his own approval after walking across the room on his hind legs.

As for the ordinary street thermometer, there is this to be said for it: It may deceive, but it gives pleasure in deceiving. When a person is sagging beneath the heat of an August midday, it is a distinct source of comfort and pride to have the thermometer register 98 degrees. Even when we are fully aware that the mercury is too high by three or four degrees, it is easy enough to make one's self believe for the moment in the higher figure. If it were not for this spiritual stimulus, I should be inclined to regard all thermometers as a nuisance. Translating Fahrenheit into Centigrade and *vice versa*, is one of the most painful mental processes I can think of. I know that I cannot perform the operation, and I cannot help trying. I remember how a certain European monarch once lay seri-

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ously ill and my evening newspaper reported that his temperature was 38.3 degrees C. On my way home I attempted to put 38.3 degrees C. into terms of F., and it speaks well for the constitution of that European monarch that he should have survived the violent fluctuations of temperature to which I subjected him. At Grand Central Station he was literally burning up under a blazing heat of 142 degrees. At Ninety-sixth Street he was down to 74. As I walked home from the station I was forced to admit that I was not sure whether one should multiply by five-ninths or nine-fifths.

I would not be misunderstood. I am no enemy of the public institutions I have criticised. Far from it; clocks, thermometers, weather-vanes, and weighing-machines—they are but the remnants of the fine old communal life of which our urban and Anglo-Saxon civilisation has kept only too little. We do not

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lounge about and take our meals in the public squares as people used to do in Athens and still do in Sicily. We no longer fill our pitchers at a common fountain or dance on the village green or regulate the life of an entire city to the same signal from a campanile. Ours is an age of exaggerated privacy, where every one works behind closed doors and glances furtively at his watch. But precisely because it is a precious survival the public clock ought to keep itself above reproach and above suspicion.

XXV

THE COMPLETE COLLECTOR—III

COOPER's museum of Proverbial Realities had proven such a source of delight to himself and his friends that the news of its destruction by fire came with a shock to all who knew him. Of all his treasures he succeeded in saving only part of his priceless collection of straws—the straw that showed which way the wind blew, the straw grasped at by a drowning man, the straw that does not enter into the manufacture of bricks, and the last straw that broke the camel's back. How would Cooper stand the blow, his friends wondered. He took it very well. Within a week he had set to work on a new fad, the collection of Statistical Realities, and in a half-year he had filled three good-

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sized lofts and a large back-yard with his treasures. Yesterday he took me through his galleries.

“What do you make of this?” he said, stopping before a glass jar some four feet high, in which, to the peril of one’s nerves, you could distinctly see the upper two-thirds of a child’s body. Head, trunk, and arms were beautifully fashioned, but there was no vestige of growth below the knee-caps. I could only show my astonishment. “Well,” he went on, “you must have seen the statement by the president of Bryn Mawr that the average number of children among college-bred mothers is 3 6-10. This is the six-tenths of a child. Here,” he said, pointing to another and somewhat larger jar, “you see three-fifths of a woman; 1 3-5 women to one man is the ratio in some parts of Ireland. Here, in adjoining bottles, are three-tenths of a physician, seven-eighths of a law-

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yer, and four-fifths of a clergyman, the latest census having shown that we have 23 3-10 physicians, 29 7-8 lawyers, and 17 4-5 physicians for every 1,000 of our population.”

Stopping before a glass case containing little heaps of ordinary copper coins, Harrington pointed out that these were the odd cents which the scrupulous science of statistics insists on leaving attached to vast sums of money. He showed me the 27 cents which, added to \$3,-469,746,854 represented the value of the foreign commerce of the United States in 1910; he showed me the twopence ha’penny which, increased by £788,990,187, constitutes the total funded debt of Great Britain; and he laid special emphasis on the eleven pennies which Tammany’s most vigorous efforts at economy could not pare off from New York City’s budget of \$166,246,729.11 for the year 1909.

Another row of glass cases contained what

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appeared at first sight a collection of comic dolls. Cooper pointed to a sturdy little mannikin in boots and a Russian blouse, who, with mouth fearfully distended, was endeavouring to swallow an iron bar four or five times his own size. "You may have read," said Cooper, "that the annual consumption of pig-iron in Russia is 3.7 tons per capita. This figure shows the fact concretely. Here," indicating the figure of an infant apparently a week or two old, "is a French baby. You may observe that she is engaged in counting her share of the national wealth, which is estimated in France at 1,254 francs 63 centimes for every man, woman, and child. She is wondering whether she ought to invest her capital in Russian treasury bonds or in Steel Common. This," pointing to a group of seven or eight dolls riding on a perfectly modelled brindled cow, "represents the proportions of domesticated

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cattle to the total population of the United States.”

The fire which flashes up in the eye of every amateur when he contemplates the gem of his collection, was visible as Cooper led the way to a good-sized platform of polished mahogany and brass on which was set up what I took to be a beautiful reproduction of the planetary system in miniature. I was right. “But observe,” said Cooper, “the details of construction. The sun is made up of infinitely small eggs, since we know that the weight of all the hen’s eggs consumed by the human race since the beginning of the Christian era is equal to one-billionth the weight of the sun. The planets are fashioned in the same way. Jupiter you see is made up of little, squirming animal-like units; that is because Jupiter occupies the same amount of space that would be filled by the descendants of a single pair of Australian rabbits

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in five hundred years, if left unchecked. Observe the orbit of the earth. It is marked out in twopenny postage stamps, for statisticians assure us that the path of the earth around the sun is equivalent in length to all the postage stamps consumed since the beginning of the nineteenth century, if laid end to end. In the same way the seven rings of Saturn are made up of copper pennies, obtained by reducing the world's annual output of gold to coins of that denomination."

We passed into a cosy little alcove lined to the ceiling with books. There seemed nothing out of the ordinary about them at first sight, but my host soon undeceived me. "These," he said, "are the books that might have been written in the last hundred years, if the time and energy that are spent on smoking, drinking, whist, bridge, and out-door games were devoted to the cultivation of literature. Here, for in-

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stance, are three plays quite as good as ‘Hamlet,’ written by two million men named Smith, who gave up the use of tobacco. Here is a philosophical poem which shows on every page an inspiration higher than Goethe ever attained; it embodies the concentrated ideas produced by twenty-five thousand former golf players, thinking half an hour a day for three days in the week. Here is a poetic version of the future life which completely outclasses the ‘Divina Commedia.’ It is compounded out of the experiences of forty-three thousand moderate drinkers who became total abstainers, seventy disbanded croquet associations, and 1,125 obsolete euchre clubs.

“Perhaps,” concluded Cooper, “you should see this before you go,” and he pointed to a single shelf of books with a curious mechanical arrangement at one side. “This shelf,” he said, “is exactly five feet long. This little

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electric motor at the side is so constructed that it gets into motion every day for twenty minutes, and stops. By a system of cogs and levers the motor propels a fine steel needle straight through the five feet of books. A glance at this brass dial shows at once how far the needle point has reached. At the present moment, for instance, it is halfway through the front cover of the 'Journal of John Woolman.' And while the dial is recording the distance covered on the five-foot shelf, the blue liquid in this glass tube measures the rising level of culture. It is a very ingenious application of President Eliot's idea, don't you think? "

XXVI

THE COMMUTER

WHENEVER Harrington urges me to go to live in the country, his place is only forty-three minutes from City Hall. But when he asked me last week to spend Saturday afternoon with him, he told me that some trains are slower than others and that I had better allow ten minutes for the ferry. I have never known a commuter who told the truth about the time it takes him to cover the distance from his office-door to his front lawn. If he is exceptionally conscientious he will take into account the preliminary ride on the Subway and possibly even the walk from his office to the Subway station. But no commuter ever alludes to the fifteen minutes' walk at the other

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end. I did know one man who never underestimated the length of his daily trips, but he was a cynic who hated the country and lived there because his wife's mother owned the house, and he multiplied by two the time it really took him to get into town. The exact truth I have never had.

As a matter of fact, sitting there in a rather stuffy car which made its way through much unlovely landscape, I reflected that there are really three different schedules on which suburban traffic is conducted. One is the time it takes a commuter's friends to come out to see him. Another is the time he claims it takes him to come into town every day. The third, and incomparably the shortest of the three, is the time your friend says it will take him to come into town after the completion of some very extensive railway improvements which, in practice, I have found are never completed. I

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am quite aware that great bridges have been built, and that railway tunnels have been opened into Long Island and other railway tunnels into New Jersey, and that steam is being rapidly replaced by electricity. But it is my firm belief that such of my suburban friends as live within the zone affected by these improvements will move away before the change for the better actually comes. I am no pessimist. I base this expectation on the simple fact that every commuter I know, for as long a period as I have known him, has been looking forward to the completion of railway improvements involving the expenditure of tens of millions of dollars. The march of progress apparently finds the suburban resident always a little in advance.

Harrington met me at the station and asked me if that was not a very good train I had come down on. The suburban virus was in me.

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I lied and said yes. As we sat at our luncheon I felt how peculiarly a vital factor in out-of-town existence the railroad constitutes. Both Harrington and his wife spoke of trains as of living, breathing people. Some trains, with all their faults, the Harringtons evidently loved. Others they detested, and made no attempt to conceal the fact. I had just finished telling Mrs. Harrington about the latest woman's suffrage parade when Harrington said: "Do you know, my dear, the 8.13 is getting worse all the time." I was still thinking of my own story, and I failed to catch just who or what it was that was getting worse all the time to an extent so inimical to Harrington's peace of mind. But Mrs. Harrington looked up, frowning slightly, and said: "Can't anything be done?" Harrington shook his head. "It's hopeless." By this time I was convinced that it must be some family skeleton that Harring-

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ton had rather oddly chosen to bring out before a stranger; some scapegrace cousin, I suspected, who probably got drunk and came to Harrington's office and demanded money. I looked discreetly into my plate as Mrs. Harrington suggested: "You might write to the superintendent." "We have," replied Harrington, "and he threatened to take it off altogether. Not that it would mean any loss. I can make just as good time now by the 8:35."

After luncheon we walked. I have never found the walking in the suburbs very good. There is a regrettable lack of elbow-room. A short stroll brings one either to a railway-siding, which is bad enough, or to a promising growth of trees, which is worse. From the road these trees look like the beginning of a primeval jungle sweeping on to far horizons. Plunge into that timber growth and in five minutes you emerge on a sewered road with concrete side-

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walks and ornamental lamp posts and a crew of Italian labourers drinking beer in the shadow of a steam-roller. It is a gash of civilisation across the face of the wilderness, and, like most deformities, it is displeasing to the eye. Walking under such conditions is not stimulative. I miss the sense of space and freedom I get in the streets of New York, where I know that I can walk twenty miles north or twenty miles east without interference or inconvenience. Give me either a mountain-top or Broadway. Suburban vistas are pitifully cramped.

That day it had rained, and I should have been additionally glad to stay indoors. But Mrs. Harrington is a fervent naturalist, and she insisted on taking me out to look at the wild flowers and listen to the bird-calls. Both of these branches of nature-study, I am convinced, call for an intensity of sympathetic imagination that I am incapable of developing;

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and especially the bird-calls. Concerning the latter, I feel sure that a great deal of humbug is being said and written. I mean to cast no reflections upon Harrington or his wife. The only occasions on which I have known Harrington to deviate from the truth have been, as I have already pointed out, in connection with his train-schedules. And as Mrs. Harrington does not travel to the city, even this charge will not hold against her. And yet I cannot help feeling that neither of the two really hears the catbird say "miaow" or the robin "cheer up," as they pretend to. At the first twitter or chirp from some invisible source Mrs. Harrington stops and with radiant face asks me whether I do not distinctly catch the "pit-pit-pity-me" of the meadow-lark. I say yes; but I really don't, and I don't believe she does. My explanation is that Mrs. Harrington is a woman and consequently ready to hear what she has

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been led to expect she would hear. As for Harrington, he is a devoted husband.

For let us look at the matter with an open mind. Our alphabetical representations of animal sounds are at best only rough approximations. Most often they are not even that. They are mere arbitrary symbols. We use consonants where the bird uses none, as when we give the name cuckoo to a bird whose cry is really "ooh, ooh." Or else we put in the wrong consonants, which is shown by the fact that different nations assign different consonantal sounds to the same bird. We do not even agree on the vowel sounds. What is there in common between our English "Cock-a-doodle-doo" and M. Rostand's "cocorico"? And we need not go as far as the animal world. See how the nations differ in spelling out that elementary human sound which is the expression of pain or surprise, and which in this country we hear

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as "Oh," and the Germans hear as "Ach," and the Greeks heard as "Ai, Ai." If the human vocal chords can be so imperfectly imitated, what shall we say of birds speaking after a manner all their own? For myself I confess that in congenial company I can hear birds say anything, but that left to myself I am sometimes puzzled by a parrot. And that is the reason why I am sceptical concerning Mrs. Harrington's accomplishments in this field.

But while the birds about the Harringtons' home simply offend my regard for the truth, the Harringtons' dog causes me acute bodily and mental discomfort. He is of a spotted white, with a disreputable black patch over one eye, and weighs, I should imagine, between eighty and ninety pounds. During luncheon he takes his place under the table, and from there emits blood-curdling howls with sufficient frequency to make conversation extremely diffi-

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cult. This he varies by nosing about the visitor's legs and growling. I am not fond of dogs under the best of circumstances. I always labour under the presumption that they will bite. Their habit of suddenly dashing across the floor, in furious pursuit of nothing in particular, upsets me. But an invisible dog under a dining-room table is a dreadful experience. It is true that I managed to give Mrs. Harrington a fairly rational account of the woman's suffrage parade. But was she aware, as I sat there smiling spasmodically, what agonies of fear were mine as I waited for those white fangs under the table to sink into my flesh? If, under the circumstances, I confused Harriet Beecher Stowe with Julia Ward Howe, and made a bad blunder about woman's rights in Finland, am I so very much to blame?

Not that the Harringtons are the worst offenders in this respect. There is an old class-

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mate, and a very dear friend, indeed, who lives on Flushing Bay, and has a pair of hopelessly ferocious dogs that hold the neighbourhood in terror. The only occasion on which they have been known to show indifference to strangers was one night when burglars broke in and stole some silver and a revolver. When I go out to Flushing, I stipulate that the dogs shall be locked up in the cellar from ten minutes before my train is due until ten minutes after I have left the house. But it would be foolhardy to omit additional precautions. Hence I always carry an umbrella with the ferrule sharpened to a point, and when I am within a block of the house I stoop and pick up a large stone, and go on my way, with all my senses acute, whistling cheerfully. It is odd how people will put themselves out to keep a harmless, poor relation out of the way of visitors, and never think of the much greater discomfort attendant

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upon the constant presence of an active bull-terrier.

I may have produced the impression that life in the country makes no appeal to me. Nothing could be further from my intentions. Whatever doubts I may have entertained on this point vanish completely as the Harringtons escort me to the station in the cool of the evening, the dog having been left at home at my request. We pass by low, white-pillared houses behind hedges, and the scent of hay comes up from the lawns, and laughter comes from the dark of the verandas. The city at such a time seems a very undesirable place to return to; a place to lose one's self in—yes, and that is all. The Harringtons never were in the city what they are here. They have taken root, they have developed local pride which is only the sense of home. As we walk they point out the residences of the leading citizens. Here lives the

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owner of one of the largest factories of mechanical pianos in the country. This Japanese temple belongs to a man who writes for some of the best-known magazines. That colonial dwelling is occupied by the lawyer who defended Mrs. Dower when she was tried for poisoning her husband. I reflect, in genuine humility, that in the city I never think of taking strangers to see Mr. William Dean Howells's house or Mr. Joseph H. Choate's. And with real regret and admiration, I say good-night to the Harringtons.

XXVII

HEADLINES

AFTER Stephane Dubost, editor of the Paris *Réveil*, had been ten days in this country, and had collected all his material for a series of volumes on the American Woman, Yankee and Yellow Peril, Democracy Décolleté, and Football *versus* the Fine Arts—to name only a few—he was asked what single feature of our life had impressed him as most characteristically American. He replied, “The headlines in your daily press.” Just what M. Dubost did think of our achievements in that department of journalism may be gathered from a letter he addressed the very same day to his friend, Marcel Complans, director of the Bureau of Cipher Codes in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

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“ In nothing, my dear Marcel, is the American genius for saving time so strikingly exemplified as in their newspaper headlines. Think of our *Figaro* or *Temps* with its dreary columns of solid type introduced by a minute solitary heading, and then pick up one of Uncle Sam’s great dailies. It may be only an item of four or five inches, what they call here a stickful or two, but are you left to make your way unassisted through the brief account? No. Your eye immediately catches a time-saving headline like this:

DESERTED GIRL WIFE TO HOLD UP MAN.

Having that concise legend before you, all you need to do, my dear Marcel, is simply to decide for yourself whether our story deals with an unscrupulous wretch who abandons his young wife to engage on a career of highway robbery;

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or whether it is the history of a deserted girl who becomes the wife of a professional outlaw; or whether it is a betrayed young wife who gives herself up to the cause of elevating the human race. A French reader, under the circumstances, would be compelled to go through as much as thirty or forty lines of small print before he secured the desired information. Thus it requires but a brief experience with American headlines to recognise that when the Chicago *Evening Post* says

FINDS ENGLISH FOOD
FOR LAND TAX FAITH

it means that an American single-taxer, who has just returned from Great Britain, believes that the English people is ready to listen to the principles of the single-tax theory. And when the New York *Sun* says

LA FOLLETTE TALKING BOLT

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it does not mean that the Senator from Wisconsin is a manifestation of crashing, celestial eloquence, but that he is advocating a secession from the Republican party. Can you not see, my friend, what magnificent economies of time are effected by headlines like

WATCH SPRINGS TRAP FOR JAPANESE SPY

over a story dealing with the capture of an Oriental suspect by a sentinel at one of the Pacific Coast forts, or

SCREAMING FRIARS TORTURED CHILD MOTHER FAINTS

which does not mean that a society of howling friars have been guilty of an atrocious crime upon an infant in the presence of its mother; or that a band of religionists are driven by torture to cries of pain, while a young mother faints at the sight. It only means that a poor

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mother, who has suddenly gone insane, breaks into a house of refuge, where her little boy is being cared for by a religious fraternity, accuses, without warrant, the brothers of torturing her child, and faints. Or take

FRENCH RACE WORN OUT

ENGLISH TO TRIUMPH.

These lines are not the summary of a study in national growth and decay, but expressive of the fact that a French bicycle team wins a signal victory over a group of exhausted English competitors. Do you see now how far towards the art of simplified story-telling these Americans have gone?

“I can only express my profound admiration, as I pass, for the genius of those men who almost automatically will dig the heart out of a “story,” and blazon it before the reader not only with marvellous brevity and meaning,

HEADLINES

but with extraordinary appropriateness of characterisation. Can you seize, for instance, the full relevancy of a headline like

PRESBYTERIAN FALLS

TWENTY FEET

or,

PROFESSOR THRICE MARRIED

DENIES AUTHENTICITY OF BIBLE

or see how the essential point is caught when a "head" writer places

FLORODORA GIRL EXPELLED

FROM CZAR'S CAPITAL

over an account of the latest ukase which banishes from St. Petersburg two hundred members of the Duma, twelve professors, fifty-five Jewish bankers and artists, all the labour delegates, as well as the agent of the American Plough Corporation, whose wife was one of the original sextette?

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“I will conclude with what to me is an example of the art of headline writing carried almost to perfection. Suppose that at Paris a long-distance foot-race between one of our countrymen and a foreign athlete had been won by our compatriot. The *Réveil* would probably say, ‘Armand Wins at Auteuil,’ and go on to give the details. But observe what they do here. I cite the article complete, headline and text:

HAYES WINS

VICTOR IN DUAL MATCH OVER DORANDO

AMERICAN LEADS ITALIAN TO THE TAPE,
AND CARRIES OFF PRIZE

DORANDO CAN DO NOTHING BETTER THAN
SECOND

ONE MORE VICTORY ADDED TO GREAT
RUNNER'S STRING

HEADLINES

TEN THOUSAND CHEERING SPECTATORS
SEE THE AMERICAN RUNNER REPEAT
HIS VICTORY AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

“New York, November 26.—The
race between Hayes and Dorando this
afternoon was won by the former.”

XXVIII

USAGE

. . . a certain class of verbal critics who can never free themselves from the impression that man was made for language and not language for man.—Professor Lounsbury.

From a large number of readers we have received requests for a ruling on disputed cases of English usage. We now proceed to answer these inquiries in accordance with the liberal standard for which Professor Lounsbury pleads. One man writes:

Question: Which is right, “To-morrow is Sunday and we are going out,” or “To-morrow will be Sunday and we shall go out?” *Answer:* Both forms are right, but as a matter of fact, if to-morrow is like other Sundays, it will prob-

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ably rain all day, and your chances of going out are not bright.

Q. Must a sentence always have coherence? What is the practice of our great writers on this point? **A.** Coherence is not essential. Thus: "Conquests! Thousands! Don Bolaro Fizzgig — Grandee — only daughter — Donna Christina—Splendid creature—loved me to distraction—jealous father—high-souled daughter—handsome Englishman—Donna Christina in despair—prussic acid—stomach pump in my portmanteau—operation performed—old Bolaro in ecstasies—consent to our union—join hands and floods of tears—romantic story—very." (Charles Dickens.)

Q. Must a sentence always have a predicate? **A.** No. For example: (1) "The Universe smiles to me. The World smiles to me. Everything. Man. Woman. Children. Presidential Candidates. Trolley Cars. Everything smiles

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to me." (*The Complete Whitmanite*) (2)
"From the frowning tower of Babel on which the insectile impotence of man dared to contend with the awful wrath of the Almighty, through the granite bulk of the beetling Pyramids lifting their audacious crests to the star-meshed skies that bend down to kiss the blue waters of Father Nile and the gracious nymphs laving their blithesome limbs in the pools that stud the sides of Pentelicus, down to our own Washington, throned like an empress on the banks of the beautiful Potomac, waiting for the end which we trust may never come." (From the *Congressional Record*.)

Q. Is "ivrybody" a permissible variant for "everybody"? A. It is. For instance, "His dinners [our ambassador's at St. Petersburg] were th' most sumchuse ever known in that ancient capital; th' carredge of state that bore him fr'm his stately palace to th' comparatively

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squalid quarters of th' Czar was such that *ivry-body* expicted to hear th' sthrains iv a calliope burst fr'm it at anny moment." (Mr. Dooley.)

Q. Is there good authority for saying, "He was given a hat," "He was shown the door," etc.? A. The form is common, and therefore correct. As, "The Senator *was paid* twenty thousand dollars for voting against the Governor"; "He *was offered* a third term, but declined"; "The coloured delegates *were handed* a lemon." (From the contemporary press.)

Q. The use of "who" and "whom" puzzles me. Must "who" always be used in the nominative case and "whom" in the objective? A. Not necessarily. Thus, "I told him who I wanted to see and that it wasn't none of his business" (W. S. Devery); "That's the first guy whom he said put him into the cooler." (Battery Dan Finn.)

Q. I am told that it is wrong to place a

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preposition at the end of a sentence. Why can't I say, "Mr. Roosevelt is a man whom I should enjoy talking *with*"? *A.* Your example is unfortunate. You should say, "Mr. Roosevelt is a man whom I should enjoy talking *after*."

Q. Is it wrong to split infinitives? Is a phrase like "to seriously complain" really objectionable? *A.* We hasten to most emphatically say "Yes!"

Q. Is there a rigid rule with regard to the use of the preterite tense? When do you say "hung" and when do you say "hanged"? *A.* Two examples from a universally recognised authority will illustrate the flexibility of our language in the general use of tenses: (1) "'I know a gen'l'man, sir,' said Mr. Weller, 'as did that, and *begun* at two yards; but he never tried it on ag'in; for he *blowed* the bird right clean away at the first fire, and nobody ever

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seed a feather on him arterwards.'” (2) “ So I take the privilidge of the day, Mary, my dear—as the gen’lem’n in difficulties did, ven he valked out of a Sunday—to tell you that the first and only time I *see* you your likeness was *took* on my hart in much quicker time and brighter colours than ever a likeness was took by the profeel macheens (wich p’r’aps you may have *heerd* on Mary my dear) altho it does finish a portrait and put the frame and glass on complete with a hook at the end to hang it up by and all in two minutes and a quarter.” (Charles Dickens.)

Q. What is “elegance” in style? I know it does not mean long words and many of them; but just what does it mean? A. Elegance is appropriateness. Long and circumlocutory terms are just as elegant in the mouth of a fashionable preacher as shorter and uglier words in the mouth of some one else. Hamlet’s “Angels

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and ministers of grace defend us!" and Chuck Connors's "Wouldn't it bend your Merry Widow?" are equally elegant.

Q. What is force in style? *A.* We may illustrate with a quotation from Hall Caine's unannounced book: "He drew her to him and kissed her as men and women have kissed through the æons, since the first star hymned to the first moonrise." Now, as a matter of fact, kissing is only about two thousand years old, and is still unknown to the Chinese, the native Africans, the Hindus, the Australians, the Indians of South America, the Polynesians, and the Eskimos; but the sentence is nevertheless a very forcible one.

XXIX

60 H.P.

FOR the purpose of getting one's name into the papers, the acquisition of a high-powered automobile may be recommended to the man who has never given a monkey dinner; whose son was never married to a show-girl in a balloon at 2.30 A.M.; whose son-in-law is neither a count, a duke, nor a prince, and does not beat his wife; who has never paid \$100,000 for a Velasquez painted in 1897, or for a mediæval Florentine altar-piece made in Dayton, Ohio. The press, like the public, does not brim over with affection for the motorist. From the newspapers it may be gathered that when a man has been seen in the front seat of an automobile his family prefers not to allude to the

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subject. Good men occasionally ride, but as a rule only on errands of mercy, and always in a friend's machine. A candidate for mayor will laugh when you accuse him of owning an opium den, taking \$10,000 a month from Mr. Morgan, or experimenting freely in polygamy; but he throws up his hands when some one proves that he has been seen in a garage.

To me this seems absurd. If people admit that the automobile is here to stay, they must also admit that it is here to move from place to place occasionally. Automobiles that did nothing but stay would obviously fail in one of their principal aims. Not that the auto has no other important functions. It is evident that motor-cars were intended for little boys who squeeze the signal bulb and stick nails into the tires; for Republican orators to cite as evidence that the American farmer does not want the tariff revised; for foreign observers

to prove that we are developing an aristocracy; and for Tammany office-holders to snatch a bit of relaxation after the day's long grind.

Motoring is not unmitigated bliss. The common belief that a body may be in only one place at one time can be easily refuted by a woman with a baby-carriage. Experience shows that such a woman, if she be put five feet from a sidewalk, with forty feet of open road behind her for an auto to pass through, will cover the forty feet backward with incredible speed and propel herself right in front of the car. What would happen if two cars came in opposite directions on opposite sides of a hundred-foot avenue cannot be predicted. Either the woman would be accompanied by another woman with a baby-carriage, or else, having propelled her own carriage in front of the machine going north, she would proceed to give her personal attention to the car going south.

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It is difficult to start on a short spin in town, under doctor's orders, without immediately beginning to wonder why house rents and office rents should be going up steadily in face of the fact that the population of New York transacts its business and pursues its pleasures entirely in the middle of the road. German citizens, as a rule, stop to light their pipes on a street crossing. When you give them the horn, they are seized with the belief that you are trying to play the prelude to "Lohengrin," and they run up and down in front of the car in extreme agitation. You frustrate their plans for a beautiful death by rasping your tires against the curb, together with your nerves. At Seventy-second Street two women are saying good-bye in the middle of the street. You swerve to one side and they pursue. You snap your spinal column as you shoot the car straight about, but when you get there they

are there. "Ladies," you say, "I am not leading a cotillion. I am an old man out for a bit of fresh air." Thereupon one calls you a brute and the other discerns from the colour of your nose that you have been drinking. At Forty-second Street you catch sight of your doctor. "Have you killed any one?" he says, after the cheerful manner of doctors. "No," you say, "but if you will kindly step into the car, I will."

Of the American farmer it may be said that, Mr. Roosevelt to the contrary notwithstanding, he is not an unimaginative, overworked being. It can be demonstrated that the contemplative life is on the increase in the rural districts. Apparently, there is nothing more peaceful, nothing more restful, nothing more soothing, nothing more permeated with the spirit of *dolce far niente*, than the American farmer on his wagon in a narrow road with an auto be-

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hind him. The grunt of the horn invariably stirs in him memories of his aged grandmother, dead these twenty years, and he falls a wondering whether he was really as kind to her as he might have been. If the road is just wide enough for one vehicle, he moves along pensively. If it is wide enough for two vehicles, he throws his horses straight across the road and enters upon a prolonged examination of his rear axle. If the road is wide enough for three vehicles, he drives zigzag. The necessity of conserving our natural resources would seem to be a meaningless phrase when we consider the natural resources of an American farmer in front of an automobile.

The law and the courts press hard on the autoist. Since the invention of the automobile fine, the position of justice of the peace has become one of the highest offices in the gift of the nation. The city magistrate is a kindred

soul. "Your Honour," says the prosecuting officer, "the question is whether the city's boulevards shall be given over to the owners of these destructive vehicles or whether they shall be held clear for the use of Marathon runners, suffragette meetings, baseball teams, and 'crap' games. The streets, your Honour, are for the benefit of the majority; yet only the other day on Fifth Avenue I saw two ash-carts and an ice wagon held up by a continuous stream of automobiles." "Right," says the judge, and he turns to the victim: "What were you doing in the middle of the street when defendant ran you down wantonly and without cause?" "I was sleeping, your Honour," says the complainant, "having been overtaken with drowsiness on my way home from a select social affair." "Outrageous," says the magistrate. "Think of running into a sleeping man. One hundred dollars."

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Such incidents make it clear that the automobile as an annihilator of space has established its reputation. In the days before the auto a drive of fifteen or twenty miles constituted a good Sunday's outing. To-day a man can leave New Rochelle at eight o'clock in the morning and pay a fine at Poughkeepsie at one in the afternoon, or he can leave Poughkeepsie at eight in the morning and at one in the afternoon be in the lock-up at New Rochelle.

What hurts the motorist's feelings most of all, however, is to be regarded by the public as a sort of licensed assassin. Yet almost any one can think of people who drive a car and take no pleasure in spilling blood. The common belief that automobile killing is a favourite sport among our best families seems to be based on the fact that in nine cases out of ten the occupants of a man-slaying automo-

bile bear such well-known Knickerbocker names as Mr. William Moriarty, chauffeur; his friend, Mr. James Dugan, who is prominent in coal-heaving circles; and their friends, the Misses Mayme Schultz and Bessie Goldstein. At bottom, it would seem, most of the criticism directed against the automobile is based on its failure to take a hog and turn him into a gentleman. But in this respect automobiles are like many of our colleges. The comforting thing is that the life of the automobile hog is an uncertain one. Sooner or later he runs down a steep place into the sea, like certain of his species mentioned in the Bible, and the question adjusts itself.

Meanwhile, however, the decent motorist must suffer for the other's sins. A friend says: "The only time I dare be seen in my machine is between 11 A.M. and 4 P.M. Before that time people point me out as a 'joy-rider' re-

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turning from a night's debauch. After that time I am a 'joy-rider' bound for a night of it." The complaint rings true. The exhilaration aroused by a punctured tire in the open country gathers strength from the remarks of the spectators who wonder if you made your money honestly. In town a defective spark-plug brings the close attention of a crowd which exchanges opinions as to whether the lady in the tonneau is your wife. All agree that you must have mortgaged your home to buy the machine.

And yet it is evident that much misunderstanding could be avoided if we had a simple code of rules for people who cross the street just as there are regulations for the autoist. A few such rules suggest themselves: 1. If one is about to cross the street in front of an auto, one should do so either before the man in the car succumbs to heart failure or after, but not

while the driver is wrestling with death; it is in such cases that one is apt to get hurt. 2. If one is in the middle of the road and sees a car approaching, one should move either (*a*) away from the car, (*b*) towards the car, (*c*) to the right, (*d*) to the left, or (*e*) stand still; under no circumstances should one attempt to combine (*a*), (*b*), (*c*), (*d*), and (*e*). 3. The safest place from which to ascertain the make of an automobile or to estimate its cost is the sidewalk.

XXX

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THE hour, the occasion, and the scene were conducive to melancholy. We had walked a good fifteen miles into the open country and back again under chilly clouds, and were now paying for it with an empty sense of weariness and disenchantment. There is nothing so depressing as a bare room lit up by flaring gas-jets against the gloom of a late afternoon of rain; and the lights in Scipione's little cellar restaurant flared away in the most outrageous manner. Harding, across the table from me, wretchedly fluttered the pages of a popular magazine and looked ill-natured and horribly unkempt. The new table-cloths had not yet been laid for dinner. The sawdust on the floor

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was mostly mire. Angelina, the cook, was screaming at Paolo and Francesca, who were trying to boil the cat. It was very dreary.

“Harding,” I said, “you were insisting only a little while ago that life is always beautiful.”

“So it is,” he replied, too listless to be defiant. “To some people.”

“To whom?”

“Well, to the two here, for instance,” and he pointed to a pair of handsome lovers playing golf all over a double page in the advertising section of his magazine. “Do you mean to say these two ever know what ugliness is, or pain, or want? Or ever grow old? Or cease to love? Here is the perfect life for you.”

“Are you so sure of that?” said some one over my shoulder, and I turned about sharply to look into the most entrancing face I have ever beheld in man or woman. It was Apollo standing there above me, or if not he, at least

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one of the divine youths that the Greeks have left for us in undying marble. He made Scipione's grimy cellar luminous with beauty.

"I beg your pardon for intruding," he said, seating himself at our table as joyously confident and as simple as an immortal should be. "But I feel myself competent to speak on the point you have raised because the Advertising Supplement you refer to is my own home. This very young man playing golf is, as you will observe, no other than myself."

There was no denying the amazing resemblance.

"You say the Advertising Supplement is your home," I collected myself sufficiently to ask, "but just how do you mean that?"

"Literally," he replied. "My whole life, and for that matter my parents' life before me, has been spent in the pages you are now fingering. My name is Pinckney, Walter Pinckney,

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and if you are sufficiently interested in my career I should be glad to describe it."

"Go ahead," cried Harding, with almost ferocious earnestness.

"If I begin a bit back before my birth," said Pinckney, "you will be patient with me. I will not detain you very long."

"Begin where you please," said Harding in the same grim manner; "only begin."

"My father," commenced young Pinckney, "at eighteen, was a sickly country lad with less than the usual elementary education and no other prospects than a life of drudgery on the old farm. But there was in him an elemental strength of will that was sufficient, as it turned out, to master fate. You have read his life again and again in the Advertising Pages of our magazines. On his nineteenth birthday, as I have heard him tell many a time, he began the reshaping of his life by investing the small

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sum of fifty cents in a manual of home exercise and enrolling himself at the same time with one of our best-known correspondence schools, which offered an attractive course in engineering and scientific irrigation. Simultaneously, from that day he carried on the work of his bodily and intellectual redemption. We still have at home a collection of the various domestic utensils which he employed in his daily training—an old armchair; a broom; a large gilt portrait frame through which he would leap twenty-five times every morning; a marble clock; a pair of water buckets; an old trunk lid, and other articles of the kind. Close beside his gymnastic apparatus we keep three trunkfuls of note-books and reports representing as many years devoted labour at his studies. At the age of twenty-six my father was a veritable Hercules and held the position of assistant to the chief engineer of an im-

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portant Eastern railroad. It was shortly after he had won this place that he met my mother."

The caressing fondness with which he uttered the last word imparted to his seemingly supreme beauty an added warmth of appeal.

"Her, too, you have met in the Advertising Columns. She had begun to teach school when a mere girl; but when her father's death threw upon her young shoulders the burden of three little children and a helpless mother, she had risen to her greater needs. She succeeded in quadrupling her income by learning to write short stories, criticism, and verse, from a literary bureau which charged her a nominal fee for instruction and purchased her output at extremely generous rates for disposal among the leading magazines. When my father first saw her—it was in the course of a Fourth of July excursion to Niagara Falls which, including a three days' stay at the best hotels, was offered

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to the public at half the usual cost—she had sent the eldest boy through college, her younger sister was teaching school, and she was free to follow the inclinations of her heart.”

“You were fortunate in the selection of your immediate ancestry,” said Harding.

“Was I not?” Pinckney responded in a flush of grateful recognition. “But that is not all. The house in which I was born, though generally recognized as one of the finest examples of Queen Anne architecture in reinforced concrete, was put up by my father, unassisted, from plans which he purchased for a ridiculously small sum. Its every nook was the abiding-place of love, of quiet content, and of nurturing comfort. The furnace was equipped with the latest automatic devices so that it had to be started only once a year. It was then left to the care of my mother, who used to give it only a few minutes’ attention every day with-

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out going to the trouble of divesting herself of the gown of fine white lawn which she always wore."

"My dear fellow," I could not keep from exclaiming, "you have almost explained yourself. In such surroundings how could you help growing up into what you are?"

"That is what I say, sir," he came back at me eagerly. "But you must call to mind, also, the fostering personal care that was bestowed upon us children. Take the matter of diet. Coffee, cocoa, excessive sweets, every food-element tending to narcotise or over-stimulate the system was rigorously excluded. Instead we had the numerous grain preparations that assist nature by contributing directly to the development of our particular faculties. In my case, for instance, it had been decided some time before I was born that in the course of time I should enter West Point. With that end in

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view Farinette, because of its muscle-building powers, was made the principal constituent of my bill of fare. Later, when my parents thought that the pulpit offered better chances of a successful career, Farinette was replaced by Panema, which is notably efficacious in the production of cerebral tissue. Just as I was taking my examinations for college it was finally determined that the sphere of corporation finance held out unrivalled facilities for advancement, and Panema gave way to Hydro-nuxia, which acts particularly on the imaginative faculties. As for my sisters, they fared no worse than I. You surely have seen them in the Advertising Pages in all their splendid bloom. Saved from overwork by soaps that make heavy washing a pleasure, eternally youthful through the use of electric massage, they smile at you through the reticulations of the tennis racket which the champion played

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with at Newport, or recline under parasols in the bow of canoes that will neither sink nor upset. They are very fond of playing Chopin on a mechanical piano while the moonlight streams over the floor of the open veranda."

Here Harding broke in sharply. "You began by differing with me on the possibility of finding complete happiness in life, and you have done nothing but refute your own position from the very first. I admit there are certain essentials toward the perfect life that you have not mentioned, but I haven't the least doubt that you already possess them or that they will come to you in time. I mean such things as riches or love."

"Ah, love," Pinckney murmured, and the shadow of a cloud passed over his divine brow.

"Surely," I said, "*you* have not sought for what love has to give and sought in vain?"

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“No,” he replied thoughtfully, “I have not failed to win love. But does love bring with it untouched felicity; that is what I ask.” He hesitated. “I will not attempt to describe her. I really could not, you know, except in a feeble way, by saying that even to other eyes than mine she is a woman more wonderful than any of my sisters, if that is at all possible. We loved at first sight. I had run down for a Sunday afternoon to Garden Towers-by-the-Sea, a beautiful suburb which a number of enterprising citizens had built up out of a sand waste to meet the needs of the tired urban worker who, in his expensive and uncomfortable city flat, finds himself longing for the life-giving breeze of the ocean and the sight of a bit of God’s open country. I was walking down the main street of the village, wearing the loosely shaped and well-padded garments that were then popular with young men, and carrying

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a set of golf-sticks in my right hand and a bull terrier under my arm. Then I saw her. She was sitting on the porch of the house which her father had purchased for one-third of what its value became when the completion of extensive rapid-transit improvements brought it within thirty-five minutes of the New York City Hall. We loved and told each other. My father, at first, insisted that before assuming the responsibilities of marriage a man should be in receipt of a larger independent income than I could boast of. But when Alice pleaded that she could be of help by raising high-grade poultry for the urban market and organising subscribers' clubs for the magazines, my father yielded. We are to be married in two months, sir."

Harding spoke up impatiently. "Still I fail to see where your unhappiness lies."

"Did I say unhappiness? That is not at

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all the word, sir. It is rather a sense of awe that seizes us both at times, when we are together, as though we were in the presence of unseen influences; as though, rather, a world not our own were projecting itself into our well-defined lives. I have shown you that Alice and I belong to a very real, very matter-of-fact world. But there are times when we seem to be walking in a land of strange sounds and sights and of shadows that fan our cheeks as they flit by."

"Oh, well," I said, "when two fond young people are together the limits of the visible world are apt to undergo undue extension."

"Let me be specific," said Pinckney. "We first became aware of this state of things some weeks ago. We were walking one afternoon at twilight through a stretch of woods not far from the shore when all at once we were conscious that the familiar aspect of things had van-

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ished. The park had become a virgin forest. Two savage figures girded with skins were panting in deadly combat. One had sunk his thumbs into the eye-sockets of his opponent, who, in turn, had buried his teeth in the flesh of the other's arm. A wild creature, almost hidden in the long tangle of her hair, crouched there, the only spectator of the battle, chanting in weird tones: 'Ai! Ai! the call of the wild summons you to the death-grapple, oh Men, and me to sing who am Woman! Fight on, oh Men; for it is Good! The Race, the Sons of your strong loins through the dizzy whirl-dance of all time, are watching you. Match man-strength against man-strength, breath-rhythm against breath-rhythm, and knee-thrust against knee-thrust!' And then one of the combatants fell, and the victor with a yell of triumph seized the woman by the hair and, flinging her over his shoulder, staggered off,

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and we heard them call to each other, 'Oh, my Male!' 'Oh, my Female!' Then we were in our own grove by the beach and Alice whispered dreamily, 'Dearest, how tame are our lives.' "

"I think I begin to understand," said I. "What happened was simply that you had walked right out of the Advertising Supplement into the Fiction pages; and that was Jack London. Had you other experiences of the kind? "

"On another occasion," he resumed, "we were walking on the beach and again in a flash we had lost our footing in the world we knew. We were in a magnificent ballroom. The chandeliers were Venetian, the orchestra was Hungarian, the decorations were priceless orchids. Every woman wore a tiara with chains of pearls. There were stout dowagers, callow youths, gamblers, and blacklegs, and, among

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the many handsome men, one of about five-and-thirty, with a wonderfully cut chin, bending sedulously over a glorious, slender girl whose eyes attested the purity of her soul and fidelity unto death. 'Dearest,' she was saying, 'what does it matter that my father was the greatest Greek scholar in America and my mother the most beautiful woman south of Mason and Dixon's line? What that I have ten million dollars and can ride, shoot, swim, golf, tennis, dance, sing, compose, cook, and interpret the Irish sagas? I love you though you have only twelve thousand a year.' And all over the hall we caught such phrases as, 'Yes, he dropped 25,000 on Non Sequitur at Bennings.' 'Oh, just down for three weeks at Palm Beach, you know.' 'Two millions in three weeks, they say, mostly out of Copper and Q.C.B.' 'Yes, just back from South Dakota on the best of terms.' Then the room vanished, we were by the sea,

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and Alice said wistfully, ‘How limited our lives are, dear.’”

I said: “My theory holds good. That was Robert Chambers, I am sure. Go on.”

“I have told you enough,” said Pinckney, “to show what I mean by the shadow over our happiness. It will pass away, of course. In the meantime I try to explain to Alice that these are phantoms we vision, of no relation to the practical life that we must lead on our side of the boundary line; I tell her that these things we see are not, and never have been and never will be. Am I right, do you think, sir?”

“Quite right,” I told him.

XXXI

THE COMPLETE COLLECTOR—IV

“My latest fad,” said Cooper, “is this little library of the greatest names in literature. It is by no means complete, but the nucleus is there.”

When Cooper speaks of his fads he does himself injustice. The world might think them fads, or worse. But I, who know the man, know that his fondness for the insignificant or the extraordinary is something more than eccentricity, something more than a collector's appetite run amuck. In reality, Cooper's soul goes out to the worthless objects he frequently brings together into odd little museums. He loves them precisely because they are insignificant. His whole life has been a

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silent protest against the arrogance of success, of high merit, of rare value. His heart is always on the side of the *Untermensch*, a name given by the Germans, a learned people, to what we call the under-dog.

“My collection,” said Cooper, “is as yet confined almost entirely to authors in the English language. Here is my Shakespeare, a first edition, I believe, though undated. The year, I presume, was about 1875. The title, you see, is comprehensive: ‘The Nature of Evaporating Inflammations in Arteries After Ligation, Accupressure, and Torsion.’ Edward O. Shakespeare, who wrote the book, is not a debated personality. His authorship of the book is unquestioned, and I assure you it is a comfort to handle a text which you know left its author’s mind exactly as it now confronts you in the page.

“Next to the Shakespeare you find my Dick-

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ens volumes, two in number. Albert Dickens published, in 1904, his 'Tests of Forest Trees.' It has been praised in authoritative quarters as an excellent work of its kind. An older book is 'Dickens's Continental A B C,' a railway guide which I am fond of thinking of as the probable instrument of a vast amount of human happiness. Imagine the happy meetings and reunions which this chubby little book has made possible—husbands and wives, fathers and children, lovers, who from the most distant corners of the earth have sought and found each other by means of the Dickens railway time-tables. To how many beds of illness has it brought a comforter, to how many habitations of despair—but I must not preach. I call your attention to the next volume, Byron. From the title, 'A Handbook of Lake Minnetonka,' you will perceive that it is in the same class as my Dickens."

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Cooper drew his handkerchief to flip the dust from a thin octavo in sheepskin. "This Emerson," he said, "is the earliest in date of my Americana. William Emerson's 'A Sermon on the Decease of the Rev. Peter Thacher' appeared in 1802, at a time when people still thought it worth while to utilise the death of a good man by putting him into a book for the edification of the living. The adjoining two volumes are by Spencer. Charles E. Spencer's 'Rue, Thyme, and Myrtle' is a sheaf of dainty poetry which was very popular in Philadelphia during the second decade after the Civil War. Do we still write poetry as single-heartedly as people did? It may be. Perhaps we might find out by comparing this other volume by Edwin Spencer, 'Cakes and Ale,' published in 1897, with the Philadelphia Spencer of forty years ago.

"I must hurry you through the rest of my

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books," said Cooper. "Thomas James Thackeray's 'The Soldier's Manual of Rifle-Firing' appeared in 1858, and undoubtedly had its day of usefulness. Thomas Kipling was professor of divinity at Cambridge University toward the end of the eighteenth century. In 1793 he edited the volume I now hold in my hand, 'Codex Bezaë,' one of the most precious of our extant MSS. of the New Testament. I like to think of that fine old Cambridge professor's name as bound up with patient, self-effacing scholarship and a highly developed spirituality. But I digress. Cast your eye over this little group of foreign writers. Here is Dumas,—Jean Baptiste Dumas,—whose 'Leçons sur la philosophie chimique,' delivered in 1835, were considered worthy of being published thirty years later. The quaint volume that comes next is by Du Maurier, who was French ambassador to the Hague about 1620. The

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title, in the Dutch, is ‘Propositie gedan door den Heere van Maurier,’ etc.—‘Propositions Advanced by the Sieur du Maurier,’ one of the Regent’s able and merry-hearted diplomats, I take it. And here is Goethe; he would repay your reading. Rudolf Goethe’s ‘Mittheilungen ueber Obst- und Gartenbau’ is one of the standard works on horticulture.

“And finally,” said Cooper with a flash of pride quite unusual in him, “the treasure of my little library—Homer; again a first edition.”

“Homer!” I cried. “An *editio princeps!*”

“Nearly one hundred and fifty years old,” he said. “The Rev. Henry Homer deserved well of his British countrymen when he gave to the world—it was in 1767—his ‘Inquiry Into the Measures of Preserving and Improving the Publick Roads of this Kingdom.’”

Cooper sat down and eyed me doubtfully, as

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if awaiting an unfavourable opinion. His face quite lit up when I hastened to assure him that his library was one of the most impressive collections it had ever been my good fortune to know.

“Very few collections,” I told him, “bear the impress of a personality. As a rule they are shopfuls of costly masterpieces such as any multi-millionaire may have if he doesn’t prefer horses or monkey dinners. But how often does one find a treasure-house like yours, Cooper, revealing an exquisitely discriminating taste in co-operation with the bold originality of the true amateur?”

XXXII

CHOPIN'S SUCCESSORS

"It is his own composition, the final word in modern music," I had been told. "He does not merely play the concerto; he lives it. Be sure to watch his face." It was not a very impressive face as artists go. It was rather heavy, rather sullen, and seemingly incapable of mirroring more than the elementary passions. The great pianist entered the hall almost unwillingly, and wound his way among the musicians with consummate indifference to the roar of applause that greeted him. You might have said that he was once more a little boy being scourged to his piano day after day by parents who had been told that they had brought forth a genius. He half-dropped into

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his seat, glanced wearily about him, then let his eyes sink expressionless on the keyboard and his hands fall flat on his knees, nerveless, heavy, apathetic.

The orchestra leader poised his baton and the two-score strings under his command swung into a noble andante. The artist at the piano slowly raised his eyes to a level with the top of his instrument, his lips just parted as if in halting wonder at something he alone in the great hall could see, the hands made as if to lift themselves from his knees. "Look at his face," my neighbour said. I looked and saw that the dull mask was slightly changing, that some emotion at last was rising to the surface of that stolid countenance, striking its cloudy aspect with the first anticipations of breaking light. Would that cloud dissolve? Would the light completely break and irradiate player, piano, and audience, all equally keyed up to

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the delayed climax? Would those massive hands rise slowly, slowly, and hanging aloft an instant crash down in a rage of harmony upon keyboard and auditors' hearts? No. The clouds once more swept over that massive face. The player moistened his lips with his tongue, half-turned on his chair, and slowly swept the hall with an indifferent, almost a disdainful eye. Then he sank into his former lassitude. His hands dropped to his side without striking the keys.. Evidently the time had not come. The violins in the orchestra sang on.

My neighbour was not the only one to fall under the spell of such masterly musicianship. Twenty-four ladies in the parquette shrank back into their seats with a half-sob of brimming emotion, and implored their escorts to look at the artist's face. Eleven ladies in the lower boxes interrupted their conversation to remark that it was wonderful what soul those

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Slavs managed to put into their playing. In the upper balconies listeners strained forward in their seats so that from below it seemed as if they were about to precipitate themselves over the railings. What expert opinion had described as the sublimest ten minutes in the great pianist's greatest concerto had just begun. The conductor slightly raised himself on his toes. Instantly through the weaving of the violins the voices of the wood instruments began to break out. The contest between the two came quickly to its climax. The strings were forced back and back, wailing an ineffective protest against the shrilling advance of the woods. A solitary 'cello made dogged resistance, knowing its cause hopeless, but determined to sell life as dearly as possible. But the 'cello, too, went down and for a bar or two the flutes and oboes sang a pæan of victory. Too soon. Upon them, like a tidal wave, swept

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down a hurricane of brasses and shook the hall with its resonant thunders.

That was the moment our artist at the piano had been waiting for. His heavy figure straightened up; it seemed to swell to monstrous proportions, forcing orchestra and leader out of the vision and consciousness of his listeners. His face now was all eloquence. A divine wrath almost made his eyes blaze as he prepared to hurl himself at the silent, yet quivering instrument. His huge hands hovered over the keyboard ready to fall and destroy. His eyes ran over the keys as if searching for the vulnerable, for the vital spot. Back and forth his eyes ran, and his outstretched fingers kept pace with them in the air. But those fingers could find no resting-place. Still the piano remained silent. And then came the inevitable reaction. Such passion could not last without crushing player and audience alike. Seven ladies in the

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parquette were grasping the arms of their chairs, and three women in the upper balcony had seized the arms of their escorts, as the brasses crashed once and died out. The flutes for an instant reappeared, to make way in turn for the violins, which now began timidly to peep out from their hiding-places. They grew bolder; they joined hands, and once more their insistent story quivered and sang throughout the house. And as they sang, the player at the piano, exhausted by his supreme effort, sank more and more into his indifferent former self. His form collapsed, the fire in his eyes died out, and the powerful hands wearily drooped and drooped till they rested once more on the player's knees. A sigh of relief swept over the hall. Human emotion could stand no more. The audience could hardly wait for the last throb of the violins, to break out in rapturous applause. The master rose, bowed sorrowfully

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towards nobody in particular, and walked off.

“Did you watch his face?” asked my neighbour. “Have you ever come across such utterly overpowering individuality? I have played for fifteen years, but if I played for fifty years I could never even approach art like this.”

XXXIII

THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT

“THE arguments for and against woman suffrage,” said Harding, “seem to me very evenly balanced. I agree with Dr. Biddle of the Society for the Promotion of Beautiful Manners, that it is unseemly for a woman to climb a truck and demand the ballot. Dr. Biddle maintains that if woman wants the ballot she should wait until every one is asleep and then go through somebody’s pockets for it. Woman, Dr. Biddle thinks, has her own peculiar sphere, which, as the latest Census figures show, includes the nursery, the kitchen, the vaudeville stage, college teaching, stenography, the law, medicine, the ministry, as well as the manufacture of agricultural implements, ammunition, artificial

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feathers and limbs, automobiles, axle-grease, boots and shoes, bread-knives, brooms, brushes, buttons, carriages and wagons, charcoal, cheese, cigars, clocks, clothing and so on to x, y, and z.

“Can anything be more fatal to our ideals of true womanliness, Dr. Biddle asks, than a suffragette who throws stones? In reply to this, Miss Annabelle Bloodthirst asserts that if we count the number of successful suffragette hits woman is never so true to her sex as when she is heaving bricks at a British prime minister.

“Professor Tumbler lays particular stress on the outrageous conduct of the English suffragettes. He recalls how the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, while eating a charlotte russe, felt his teeth strike against a hard object, which turned out to be a cardboard cylinder inscribed ‘Votes for Women.’ The chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster was about to light his after-dinner cigar the other day when the cigar

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suddenly expanded into a paper fan bearing the legend, 'Tyrants, beware!' The newest Dreadnought with the First Lord of the Admiralty on board was preparing to set out on her trial trip when it was discovered that the boilers were not making steam. When the furnace doors were opened two dozen suffragettes, concealed within, began to shout, 'We want votes!' The leader of the Opposition is known to have walked all the way down Piccadilly with a tag tied to his coattails inscribed: 'I see no reason for bestowing the suffrage on women.'

"But perhaps the most dastardly outrage occurred at the baptism of the youngest child of a prominent treasury official. It seems that the nurse, who was a suffragette in disguise, had removed the child, a girl, and substituted a mechanical doll, with a phonographic attachment. The clergyman was in the middle of his discourse when the doll began to scream, 'Votes

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for women.' The father gasped, 'What! So early?' and fainted.

"The more you weigh the reasons pro and con," continued Harding, as he lit one of my cigars, "the harder it is to decide. Mrs. Cadgers has pointed out that under our present system the wife of a college professor is not allowed to vote, whereas an illiterate Greek fruit peddler may. But Mr. Rattler replies that the college professor, too, seldom votes, and if he does he spoils his ballot by trying to split his ticket. Why, demands Mrs. Cadgers, should women who pay taxes be refused a voice in the management of public affairs? Because, replies Mr. Rattler, the suffrage and taxes do not necessarily go together. In our country at the present day many millionaires who regularly cast their votes never pay their taxes.

"Mr. Rattler is particularly afraid that woman suffrage will break up the family.

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‘Imagine,’ he says, ‘a family in which the husband is a Democrat and the wife a Cannon Republican. Imagine them constantly fighting out the subject of tariff revision over the supper-table, and conceive the dreadful effect on the children, who at present are accustomed to see father light his cigar after supper and fall asleep. Or suppose the wife develops a passion for political meetings. That means that the husband will have to stay at home with the baby.’ ‘Well,’ replies Mrs. Cadgers, ‘such an arrangement has its advantages. It would not only give the wife a chance to learn the meaning of citizenship, but it would give the husband a chance to get acquainted with the baby.’ And besides, Mrs. Cadgers goes on to argue, a woman’s political duties need not take up more than a small fraction of her time. That, retorts Mr. Rattler, with a sneer, is because woman derives her ideas on the subject from

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seeing her husband fulfil his duties as a citizen once every two years when he forgets to register.

“An excellent debate on the subject was the one between Mrs. Excelsior, who spoke in favour of the ballot for women, and Professor Van Doodle, who upheld the negative. Professor Van Doodle maintained that women are incapable of taking a genuine interest in public affairs. What is it that appeals to a woman when she reads a newspaper? A Presidential election may be impending, a great war is raging in the Far East, an explorer has just returned from the South Pole, and, woman, picking up the Sunday paper, plunges straight into the fashion columns! She hardly finds time to answer her husband's petulant inquiry as to what she has done with the comic supplement. Can woman take an impersonal view of things? No, says Professor Van Doodle. In a critical Presidential election, one in which the fate of

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the country is at stake, she will vote for the candidate from whom she thinks she can get most for her husband and her children, whereas, her husband under the same circumstances will cast aside all personal interests and vote the same ticket his father voted for. Woman, concluded the professor, is constitutionally incapable of distinguishing between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood.

“Mrs. Excelsior made a spirited defence. She showed that woman’s undeveloped sense of what truth and honesty are, would not handicap her in the pursuit of practical politics. She argued that the complicated problems of municipal finance are no easier for the man who sets out to raise a family on fifteen dollars a week than for the woman who succeeds in doing so. She declared that a person who can travel thirty miles by subway and surface car, price \$500 worth of dressgoods, and buy her lunch, all on

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fifteen cents in cash and a transfer ticket, would make a good comptroller for New York City.

“Professor Van Doodle claimed that under woman suffrage only a good-looking candidate would stand a chance of being elected. Mrs. Excelsior replied that there was no reason for believing that women would be more particular in choosing a State Senator than in selecting a husband. The professor was foolish when he asserted that if women went to the polls they would vote for the aldermen and the sheriffs, and would forget to vote for the President of the United States, and would insist on doing so in a postscript. This was of a piece with the other ancient jest that women are sure to vote for a Democrat when at heart they prefer a Republican, and *vice versa*.

“The whole case,” concluded Harding, “was summed up by the Rev. Dr. Hollow when he said

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that in theory there is no objection to the present arrangement by which man rules the earth through his reason, and woman rules man through his stomach; but unfortunately, the human reason and the average man's stomach are apt to get out of order."

XXXIV

THE GERMS OF CULTURE

IN my afternoon paper there was a letter by Veritas who tried to prove something about the Trusts by quoting from the third volume of Macaulay's history. After dinner I took the book from the shelf and as I struck it against the table to let the dust fly up, I thought of what Mrs. Harrington said. The Harringtons had spent an evening with me. As they rose to go Mrs. Harrington ran the tip of her gloved finger across half a dozen dingy volumes and sniffed. "Why don't you put glass doors on your bookshelves?" she asked. It was a raw point with me and she knew it. "The pretty kind, perhaps," I sneered, "with leaded panes and an antique iron lock?" "Exactly,"

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she replied. "The dust here is abominable. You must be just steeped in all sorts of infection; and perhaps if you kept your books under lock and key people wouldn't run away with them." I was a fool to have tried irony upon Mrs. Harrington. Her outlook upon life is literal and domestic. Books are to her primarily part of a scheme of interior decoration. Harrington's views come closer to my own, but Harrington is an indulgent husband.

The incident was now a week old, but something of the original fury came back to me. It was exasperating that the world should be so afraid of dust in the only place where dust has meaning and beauty. People who will go abroad in motor cars and veneer themselves with the germ-laden dust of the highway, find it impossible to endure the silent deposit of the years on the covers of an old book. And the dust of the gutter that is swept up by trailing

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skirts? And the dust of soggy theatre-chairs? And the dust of old beliefs in which we live, my friend? And the dust that statesmen and prophets are always throwing into our eyes? None of these interfere with Mrs. Harrington's peace of mind. But when it comes to the dust on the gilt tops of my red-buckrammed Molière she fears infection.

And yet Harrington is a man of exceptional intelligence. He would agree with me that infection from book-dust is not an ignoble form of death. I sit there and plot obituaries. "Mr. H. Wellington Jones," says the *Evening Star*, "died yesterday afternoon from ptomaine poisoning, after a very brief illness. Friday night he was with a merry group of diners in one of our best-known and most brilliantly lighted Broadway restaurants. He partook heartily of lobster salad, of which, his closest friends declare, he was inordinately fond. Almost im-

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mediately he complained of being ill and was taken home in a taxicab." If I were H. Wellington Jones and it were my fate to die of poison I could frame a nobler end for myself. "Mr. H. Wellington Jones," I would have it read, "died yesterday of some mysterious form of bacterial poisoning contracted while turning over the pages of an old family Bible which he was accustomed to consult at frequent intervals. Mr. Smith had a cut finger which was not quite healed and it is supposed that a dust-speck from the pages of the old book must have entered the wound and induced sepsis. He was found unconscious in his chair with the book open at the thirtieth chapter of Proverbs." Yes, I sometimes find it hard to understand what Harrington, a man of really fine sensibilities, sees in Mrs. Harrington. The very suggestion of locking up books to prevent their being carried away hurts like the screech of a

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pencil upon a slate. I think of Mrs. Harrington and then I think of Cooper. Cooper's shelves are continuously being denuded by his friends. But if you think of Cooper as a helpless victim you are sadly mistaken. There is an elaborate scheme behind it all, a scheme of such transcendent ingenuity as only simple-hearted, sweet-natured, unpractised, purblind visionaries like Cooper are capable of.

He let me into the secret one day when he saw that I was about to find it out for myself. "I know very many dear people," he said, "who are too busy to read books or too little in the habit of it. You know them, too; they are men and women in whom the pulse of life beats too rapidly for the calm pleasures of reading. They are not insensible to fine ideas, but they must see these ideas in concrete form. If I, for instance, wish to know something about Spain, I get one of Martin Hume's books, but

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these people take a steamer and go to Spain. I have read everything of Meredith's and they have read almost nothing, but they saw Meredith in London and spent a week-end with him at a country-house in Sussex. I avoid celebrities in the flesh. I don't want to minister to them and I want still less to patronise them. I am afraid I should be disappointed in them and I am sure they would be disappointed in me.

"However, that's not the point," says Cooper. "The problem is to make a man read who won't read of his own accord. I do it by asking such a man to dinner. I pull out a volume of Marriott's and remark, without emphasis, that after infinite exertion I have just got it back from Woolsey, who is wild over the book. The fires of envy and acquisition flash in my visitor's eye. Might he have the book for a day or two? Yes, I say after some hesitation,

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but he must promise to bring it back. He grows fervent. Of course he will bring it back, by Saturday at the very latest and in person. And he is my man from that moment. I have lost the book, of course, but I have smuggled my troops within the fort, I have laid the train, I have transmitted the infection. The serpent is in the garden. Time will do the work." The allusion was to Cooper's bookplate, a red serpent about a golden staff.

"Not that I leave it altogether to time," says Cooper. "Once I have handed over the book to Hobson, I make it a point to call on him at least once a week. Do you see why? Left to himself, Hobson might soon outlive the first flush of his enthusiasm for that book. But if Hobson expects me to drop in at any moment, he is afraid I may find the book on his library table and ask him whether he has read it. So he hides the book in his bedroom. Then

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he is indeed mine. Some night he will be out of sorts and find it hard to go to sleep. His eye will fall on the book lying there on his table, and he will pick it up, at the same time lighting a cigar. I shall never see that book again. But, I leave it to you, who needs that book more, I or Hobson? ”

But Cooper did not tell all. I know he has made use of shrewder tactics. Ask any one of his acquaintances why Cooper is never seen without a half-dozen magazines under his arm, an odd volume or two of French criticism, and a couple of operatic scores. They will reply that it is just Cooper's way. It goes with his black slouch hat, his badly-creased trousers, his flowing cravat, and his general air of pre-Raphaelite ineptitude. It goes with his comprehensive ignorance of present-day politics and science, and everything else in the present that well-informed people are supposed to

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know. It goes with his total inability to be on time for dinners, and his habit of getting lost in the subway. But Cooper is not as often in the clouds as some imagine.

How many of Cooper's friends, for example, have ever found peculiar significance in his talent for forgetting things in other people's houses? Beneath that apparently characteristic trait there is a Machiavellian motive which I alone have found out. Hobson, let us say, has been taking dinner with Cooper, who gently pulls a copy of "Monna Vanna" from the shelf. Hobson does not rise to the bait. He may have heard that Maeterlinck is a "high-brow" and it frightens him. Or Hobson may not be going home that night, or he may object to carrying a parcel in the subway, or for any other reason he will omit to take the book with him. "The next day," says Cooper, "I pay Hobson a return visit, and forget the book on

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his hall-table. Frequently Hobson may be too busy to take notice of the accident. In that case I call him up on the telephone as soon as I leave his house and ask in great agitation whether by any chance I have left a volume of Maeterlinck on his hall-table. Sometimes I add that Woolsey has been after that volume for weeks. That night, I feel sure, Hobson will carry the book up to his bedroom."

And as Cooper spoke I thought of the Smith family, whom, by methods like those I have described, Cooper succeeded in saving from themselves. Nerves in the Smith family were badly rasped. The mother was not making great headway in her social campaigns. Her husband chafed at his children's idleness and extravagance. The children went in sullen fashion about their own business. They had no resources of their own. There was gloom in that household and stifled rancour, and the danger

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of worse things to come, until the day when Cooper called and forgot at one blow a copy of "Richard Feverel," the "Bab Ballads," and the third volume of Ferrero's "Rome."

As I have said, Cooper was not blind to the good he was doing. False modesty was not one of his failings. He would continually have me admire his bookshelves. The books he was proudest of were those he had lent or given away. . . . "I have a larger number of books missing," he would boast, "than any man of my acquaintance. This big hole here is my Gibbon. I sent it to an interesting old chap I met at a public dinner some years ago. He was a prosperous hardware merchant, self-made, and, like all self-made men, a bit unfinished. He had read very little. I don't recall how I happened to mention Gibbon or to send him the set. I think I may have forgotten the first volume at his office the next morning. He de-

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voured Gibbon. From him he went to Tacitus. He has since read hundreds of books on the Roman empire and he has other hundreds of volumes waiting to be read. But somehow he has never thought of sending me back my shabby old Gibbon. And that was the way with my Montaigne—gone. And here were two editions of Gulliver. I lent one to a nephew of the Harringtons and the other to a rather prim young lady from Boston who impressed me as having had too much Emerson. My Shelley is gone. My ‘Rousseau’s Confessions’ is also gone.” And Cooper smiled at me beatifically.

That was Cooper. But Mrs. Harrington that night saw things in quite a different light. She grumbled and sniffed, and finally grew vehement. I am not a saint like Cooper, but here and there my shelves, too, show the visitations of friends. “Not a single complete set,” wailed Mrs. Harrington, “everything

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lugged away by people who should be taught to know better. Browning, volumes I, II, V, and VII—four volumes gone. Middlemarch, volume II, first volume gone. Morley's Gladstone, volumes I and III, one volume gone. I wager you don't even know who has the second volume of your Gladstone. Do you, now? "

To tell the truth, I did not for the moment know. And as I hesitated she thrust one of the volumes in triumph at me and mechanically I opened the book and saw a red serpent about a golden staff. "I remember now," I told Mrs. Harrington. "I'll get the second volume the next time I call on Cooper."

THE END

